A SALUTE FROM THE FLEET

by

ALFRED NOYES

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A SALUTE FROM THE FLEET

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE LOOM OF YEARS
THE FLOWER OF OLD JAPAN
THE FOREST OF WILD THYME
FORTY SINGING SEAMEN
DRAKE: AN ENGLISH EPIC
THE ENCHANTED ISLAND
TALES OF THE MERMAID TAVERN
COLLECTED POEMS. 2 VOLS.
RADA

WILLIAM MORRIS
(English Men of Letters Series)

A SALUTE FROM THE FLEET

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

ALFRED NOYES

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Sword of England	1
The Search-Lights	3
The Heart of Canada	6
The Return of the Home-Born	8
A Salute from the Fleet	10
In Memory of a British Aviator	20
Forward	22
Before the World	24
The Waggon	27
The Lord of Misrule	29
The Repeal	35
The Sacred Oak	37
The Trumpet of the Law	50
A Spell	62
Crimson Sails	67
The River of Stars	71
A Knight of Old Japan	80
Beyond Death	81
The Strange Guest	83
Ghosts	86

A Salute from the Fleet

	PAGE
The Day of Remembrance	88
The Hill-Flowers	90
On the Embankment	94
The Iron Crown	99
Enceladus	100
In Memoriam, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor	112
Inscription	115
The Torch	116
After Rain	119
The World's Wedding	120
Old Grey Squirrel	123
The Great North Road	126
The Outlaw	129
To a Friend of Boyhood, lost at Sea	131
Blind Moone of London	133
The Hedge-Rose opens	139
The May-Tree	140
Old Letters	141
Lamps	143
At Eden Gates	145
The Psyche of our Day	147
Paraclete	150
The Death of a Great Man	152
The Old Knight's Vigil	154
The Inner Passion	156
A Country Lane in Heaven	158

Contents

	PAGE
To the Destroyers	160
The Bringers of Good News	161
The Trumpet-Call	164
Values	168
The Heroic Dead	169
The Carol of the Fir-Tree	171
The Cry in the Night	177
Astrid	180
The Inimitable Lovers	183
The White Cliffs	190
The Roman Way	192
Thrice-Armed	194
A Song of Hope	196
The Crags	198
On the South Coast	202
Older than the Hills	204
The Song-Tree	206

THE SWORD OF ENGLAND

1912

NOT as one muttering in a spell-bound sleep
Shall England speak the word;
Not idly bid the embattled lightnings leap,
Nor lightly draw the sword.

Let despots grope by night in a blind dream:
The cold clear morning star
Should like a trophy in her helmet gleam
When England sweeps to war.

Not like a derelict, drunk with surf and spray,
And drifting down to doom;
But like the Sun-god calling up the day
Should England rend that gloom.

Not as in trance, at some hypnotic call,
Nor with a doubtful cry;
But a clear faith, like a banner above us all,
Rolling from sky to sky.

The Sword of England

She sheds no blood to that vain god of strife
  Whom tonguesters call " renown " ;
She knows that only they who reverence life
  Can nobly lay it down ;

And these shall ride from life and home and love
  Through death and hell that day ;
But O, her faith, her flag, must burn above;
  Her soul must lead the way.

THE SEARCH-LIGHTS

SHADOW by shadow, stripped for fight,
The lean black cruisers search the sea.
Night-long their level shafts of light
Revolve, and find no enemy.
Only they know each leaping wave
May hide the lightning, and their grave.

And in the land they guard so well
Is there no silent watch to keep ?
An age is dying, and the bell
Rings midnight on a vaster deep.
But over all its waves, once more,
The search-lights move, from shore to shore.

And captains that we thought were dead,
And dreamers that we thought were dumb,

And voices that we thought were fled,
  Arise, and call us, and we come ;
And " search in thine own soul," they cry ;
" For there, too, lurks thine enemy."

Search for the foe in thine own soul,
  The sloth, the intellectual pride ;
The trivial jest that veils the goal
  For which our fathers lived and died ;
The lawless dreams, the cynic Art,
That rend thy nobler self apart.

Not far, not far into the night,
  These level swords of light can pierce ;
Yet for her faith does England fight,
  Her faith in this our universe ;
Believing Truth and Justice draw
From founts of everlasting law ;

Therefore a Power above the State,
  The unconquerable Power returns.

The Search-Lights

The fire, the fire that made her great
  Once more upon her altar burns.
Once more, redeemed and healed and whole,
She moves to the Eternal Goal.

THE HEART OF CANADA

July 1912

BECAUSE her heart is all too proud
—Canada! Canada! fair young Canada—
To breathe the might of her love aloud,
Be quick, O Motherland!
Because her soul is wholly free
—Canada kneels, thy daughter, Canada—
England, look in her eyes and see,
Honour and understand.

Because her pride at thy masthead shines,
—Canada! Canada!—queenly Canada
Bows with all her breathing pines,
All her fragrant firs.
Because our isle is little and old
—Canada! Canada!—young-eyed Canada
Gives thee, Mother, her hands to hold,
And makes thy glory hers.

The Heart of Canada

Because thy Fleet is hers for aye,
—Canada! Canada!—clear-souled Canada,
Ere the war-cloud roll this way,
Bids the world beware.
Her heart, her soul, her sword are thine
—Thine the guns, the guns of Canada!—
The ships are foaming into line,
And Canada will be there.

THE RETURN OF THE HOME-BORN

ALL along the white chalk coast
The mist lifts clear.
Wight is glimmering like a ghost.
The ship draws near.
Little inch-wide meadows
Lost so many a day,
The first time I knew you
Was when I turned away.

Island—little island—
Lost so many a year,
Mother of all I leave behind
—Draw me near !—
Mother of half the rolling world,
And O, so little and gray,
The first time I found you
Was when I turned away.

Return of the Home-Born

Over yon green water
Sussex lies.
But the slow mists gather
In our eyes.
England, little island
—God, how dear !—
Fold me in your mighty arms,
Draw me near.

Little tawny roofs of home,
Nestling in the gray,
Where the smell of Sussex loam
Blows across the bay . . .
Fold me, teach me, draw me close,
Lest in death I say
The first time I loved you
Was when I turned away.

A SALUTE FROM THE FLEET

I

The Guns of H.M.S. Royal Sovereign

OCEAN-MOTHER of England, thine is the crowning acclaim!
Here, in the morning of battle, from over the world and beyond,
Here, by our fleets of steel, silently foam into line
Fleets of our glorious dead, thy shadowy oak-walled ships.
Mother, for O, thy soul must speak thro' our iron lips!
How should we speak to the ages, unless with a word of thine?
Utter it, Victory! Let thy great signal flash thro' the flame!
Answer, *Bellerophon! Marlborough, Thunderer, Condor*, respond!

A Salute from the Fleet

II

The Guns of H.M.S. Majestic

Out of the ages we speak unto you, O ye ages to be!
Rocks of Sevastopol, echo our thunder-word, bruit it afar!
Roll it, O Mediterranean, round by Gibraltar again!
Buffet it, Porto Bello, back to the Nile once more!
Answer it, great St. Vincent! Answer it, Elsinore,
Buffet it back from your crags and roll it over the main!
Heights of Quebec, O hear and re-echo it back to the Baltic Sea!
Answer it, *Camperdown!* Answer it, answer it, *Trafalgar!*

III

The Guns of H.M.S. Rainbow

How should we speak to the ages, if not with a word of thine,
Maker of cloud and harvest, foam and the sea-bird's wing,
Ocean-Mother of England and all things living and free ?
Deep that wast moved by the Spirit to bloom with the first white morn,
Mother of Light and Freedom, mother of hopes unborn,
Speak, O world-wide welder of nations, O Soul of the sea !
Thine was the watch-word that called us of old o'er the gray sky-line :
Lift thy stormy salute ! It is freedom and peace that we bring !

IV

The Guns of H.M.S. Victory

Therefore on thee we call, O Mother, for we
are thy sons !
Speak, with thy world-wide voice, O wake us
anew from our sleep !
Speak, for the Light of the world still lives
and grows on thy face !
Give us the ancient Word once more, the un-
changeable Word,—
This that Nelson knew, this that Effingham
heard,
This that resounds for ever in all the hearts
of our race,
This that lives for a moment on the iron lips
of our guns,
This—that echoes for ever and ever—the
Word of the Deep.

A Salute from the Fleet

v

The Guns of H.M.S. Dreadnought

How shall a king be saved by the multitude of an host ?
Was not the answer thine, when fleet upon fleet swept, hurled
Blind thro' the dark North Sea, with all their invincible ships ?
Thine was the answer, O mother of all men born to be free !
Witness again, Cape Wrath !—O thine, everlastingly,
Thine as Freedom arose and rolled thy song from her lips,
Thine when she 'stablished her throne in thy sight, on our rough rock-coast,
Thine with thy lustral glory and thunder, washing the world !

A Salute from the Fleet

VI

The Guns of H.M.S. Temeraire

O for that ancient cry of the watch at the mid-
night bell,
Under the unknown stars, from the decks that
Frobisher trod!
Hark, *Before the world?*—he questions a
fleet in the dark!
Answer it, friend or foe! And, ringing from
mast to mast,
Mother, hast thou forgotten what counter-cry
went past,
Answering still as he questioned? *Before*
the world? O, hark,
Ringing anear, *Before the world? . . . was*
God! . . . All's well!
Dying afar . . . *Before the world?* . . . All's
well . . . *was God!*

VII

The Guns of H.M.S. Revenge

Raleigh and Grenville heard it, Knights of the Ocean-sea !
Have we forgotten it only, we with our leagues of steel ?
Give us our watchword again, O mother, in this great hour !
Here, in the morning of battle, here as we gather our might,
Here, as the nations of earth in the light of thy freedom unite,
Shake our hearts with thy Word, O 'stablish our peace on thy power !
'Stablish our power on thy peace, thy glory, thy liberty,
'Stablish on thy deep Word the throne of our Commonweal !

VIII

The Guns of H.M.S. Leviathan

They that go down to the sea in ships—they heard it of old—
They shall behold His wonders, alone on the Deep, the Deep !
Have *we* forgotten, we only ? O, rend the heavens again,
Voice of the Everlasting, shake the great hills with thy breath !
Roll the Voice of our God thro' the valleys of doubt and death !
Waken the fog-bound cities with the shout of the wind-swept main,
Inland over the smouldering plains, till the mists unfold,
Darkness die, and England, England arise from sleep.

IX

The Guns of H.M.S. Triumph

Queen of the North and the South, Queen of our ocean-renown,
England, England, England, O lift thine eyes to the sun!
Wake, for the hope of the whole world yearns to thee, watches and waits!
Now on the full flood-tide of the ages, the supreme hour
Beacons thee onward in might to the purpose and crown of thy power!
Hark, for the whole Atlantic thunders against thy gates,
Take the Crown of all Time, all might, earth's crowning Crown,
Throne thy children in peace and in freedom together, O weld them in one.

x

The Guns of the Fleet

Throne them in triumph together. Thine is the crowning cry!
Thine the glory for ever in the nation born of thy womb!
Thine the Sword and the Shield, and the shout that Salamis heard,
Surging in Æschylean splendour, earth-shaking acclaim!
Ocean-mother of England, thine is the throne of her fame!
Breaker of many fleets, O thine the victorious word,
Thine the Sun and the Freedom, the God and the wind-swept sky,
Thine the thunder and thine the lightning, thine the doom!

IN MEMORY OF A BRITISH AVIATOR

ON those young brows that knew no fear
We lay the Roman athlete's crown,
The laurel of the charioteer,
The imperial garland of renown,
While those young eyes, beyond the sun,
See Drake, see Raleigh, smile " Well done."

Their desert seas that knew no shore
To-night with fleets like cities flare ;
But, frailer even than theirs of yore,
His keel a new-found deep would dare :
They watch, with thrice-experienced eyes
What fleets shall follow through the skies.

They would not scoff, though man should set
To feebler wings a mightier task.

In Memory of a British Aviator

They know what wonders wait us yet.
Not all things in an hour they ask;
But in each noble failure see
The inevitable victory.

A thousand years have borne us far
From that dark isle the Saxon swayed,
And star whispers to trembling star
While Space and Time shrink back afraid,—
"Ten thousand thousand years remain
For man to dare our deep again."

Thou, too, shalt hear across that deep
Our thundering fleets of thought draw nigh,
Round which the suns and systems sweep
Like cloven foam from sky to sky,
Till Death himself at last restore
His captives to our eyes once more.

. . . . . .

Feeble the wings, dauntless the soul!
Take thou the conqueror's laurel crown;
Take—for thy chariot grazed the goal—
The imperial garland of renown;
While those young eyes, beyond the sun,
See Drake, see Raleigh, smile "Well done."

FORWARD

"A THOUSAND creeds and battle-cries,
A thousand warring social schemes,
A thousand new moralities,
And twenty thousand thousand dreams;

"Each on his own anarchic way,
From the old order breaking free,
Our ruined world desires," you say,
"Licence once more, not Liberty."

But ah, beneath the wind-whipt foam
When storm and change are on the deep,
How quietly the tides come home,
And how the depths of sea-shine sleep.

And we that march towards a goal,
Destroying, only to fulfil
The law, the law of that great soul
Which moves beneath your alien will;

Forward

We, that like foemen meet the past
  Because we bring the future, know
We only fight to achieve at last
  A great re-union with our foe ;

Re-union in the truths that stand
  When all our wars are rolled away ;
Re-union of the heart and hand
  And of the prayers wherewith we pray ;

Re-union in the common needs,
  The common strivings of mankind ;
Re-union of our warring creeds
  In the one God that dwells behind.

Then—in that day—we shall not meet
  Wrong with new wrong, but right with right ;
Our faith shall make your faith complete
  When our battalions re-unite.

Forward !—what use in idle words ?—
  Forward, O warriors of the soul !
There will be breaking up of swords
  When that new morning makes us whole.

BEFORE THE WORLD

(Written in answer to certain statements on the "origin of life")

I

IN the beginning? . . . Slowly grope we back
Along the narrowing track,
Back to the deserts of the world's pale prime,
The mire, the clay, the slime,
And then—what then?—Surely to something *less!*
Back, back to Nothingness.

II

You dare not halt upon that dwindling way.
There is no gulf to stay
Your footsteps to the last. Go back you must.
Far, far below the dust
Descend, descend. Grade by dissolving grade,
We follow, unafraid.
Dissolve, dissolve, this moving world of men
Into thin air. And then?

III

O pioneers, O warriors of the light,
In that abysmal night,
Will you have courage, then, to rise and tell
Earth of this miracle ?
Will you have courage, then, to bow the head
And say, when all is said,—
Out of this Nothingness arose our thought ?
This blank abysmal Nought
Woke, and brought forth that lighted City street,
Those towers, and that great fleet.

IV

When you have seen those vacant primal skies
Beyond the centuries,
Watched the pale mists across their darkness flow,
(As in a lantern show !)
Watched the great hills like clouds arise, and set,
And one named Olivet ;
When you have seen as a shadow passing away
One child clasp hands and pray ;

Before the World

When you have seen emerge from that dark mire
One martyr, ringed with fire ;
Or from that Nothingness, by special grace,
One woman's love-lit face . . . .

Will you have courage, then, to front that law
(From which your sophists draw
Their only right to flout one human creed)
That nothing can proceed
(Not even thought, not even love !) from less
Than its own nothingness.
The law is yours. But dare you waive your pride,
And kneel where you denied ?
The law is yours. Dare you re-kindle, then,
One faith for faithless men ;
And say you found, on that dark road you trod,
In the beginning—God.

THE WAGGON

CRIMSON and black on the sky, a waggon of clover
Slowly goes rumbling, over the white chalk road;
And I lie in the golden grass there, wondering why
So little a thing
As the jingle and ring of the harness,
The hot creak of leather,
The peace of the plodding,
Should suddenly, stabbingly, make it
Dreadful to die.

Only, perhaps, in the same blue summer weather,
Hundreds of years ago, in this field where I lie,
Cædmon, the Saxon, was caught by the self-same thing:

The Waggon

The serf lying, black with the sun, on his
beautiful wain-load,
The jingle and clink of the harness,
The hot creak of leather,
The peace of the plodding;
And wondered, O terribly wondered,
That men must die.

THE LORD OF MISRULE

"On May days the wild heads of the parish would choose a Lord of Misrule, whom they would follow even into the church, though the minister were at prayer or preaching, dancing and swinging their may-boughs about like devils incarnate."—*Old Puritan Writer.*

ALL on a fresh May morning, I took my love to church,
To see if Parson Primrose were safely on his perch.
He scarce had got to *Thirdly*, or squire begun to snore,
When, like a sun-lit earthquake,
A green and crimson earthquake,
A frolic of madcap May-folk came whooping through the door :—

Come up, come in with streamers !
Come in with boughs of may !
Come up and thump the sexton,
And carry the clerk away.

Now skip like rams, ye mountains,
Ye little hills, like sheep !
Come up and wake the people
That parson puts to sleep.

They tickled their nut-brown tabors. Their garlands flew in showers,
And lasses and lads came after them, with feet like dancing flowers.
Their queen had torn her green gown, and bared a shoulder as white,
O, white as the may that crowned her,
While all the minstrels round her
Tilted back their crimson hats and sang for sheer delight :

Come up, come in with streamers !
Come in, with boughs of may !
Now by the gold upon your toe
You walked the primrose way.
Come up, with white and crimson !
O, shake your bells and sing ;
Let the porch bend, the pillars bow,
Before our Lord, the Spring !

The Lord of Misrule

The dusty velvet hassocks were dabbled with fragrant dew,
The font grew white with hawthorn, it frothed in every pew.
Three petals clung to the sexton's beard as he mopped and mowed at the clerk,
And "Take that sexton away," they cried;
"Did Nebuchadnezzar eat may?" they cried.
"Nay, that was a prize from Betty," they cried, "for kissing her in the dark."

Come up, come in with streamers!
Come in, with boughs of may!
Who knows but old Methuselah
May hobble the green-wood way?
If Betty could kiss the sexton,
If Kitty could kiss the clerk,
Who knows how Parson Primrose
Might blossom in the dark?

The congregation spluttered. The squire grew purple and all,
And every little chorister bestrode his carven stall.

The parson flapped like a magpie, but none could
hear his prayers ;
For Tom Fool flourished his tabor,
Flourished his nut-brown tabor,
Bashed the head of the sexton, and stormed the
pulpit stairs.

High in the old oak pulpit
This Lord of all mis-rule—
I think it was Will Summers
That once was Shakespeare's fool—
Held up his hand for silence,
And all the church grew still :
" And are you snoring yet," he said,
" Or have you slept your fill ? "

" Your God still walks in Eden, between the
ancient trees,
Where Youth and Love go wading through pools
of primroses.

And this is the sign we bring you, before the darkness fall,
That Spring is risen, is risen again,
That Life is risen, is risen again,
That Love is risen, is risen again, and Love is Lord of all.

At Paske began our morrice
And ere Pentecost our May ;
Because, albeit your words be true,
You know not what you say.
You chatter in church like jackdaws,
Words that would wake the dead,
Were there one breath of life in you,
One drop of blood, he said.

He died and He went down to hell! You know not what you mean.
Our rafters were of green fir. Also our beds were green.

But out of the mouth of a fool, a fool, before the darkness fall,
We tell you He is risen again,
The Lord of Life is risen again,
The boughs put forth their tender buds, and Love is Lord of all!

He bowed his head. He stood so still,
They bowed their heads as well.
And softly from the organ-loft
The song began to swell.
Come up with blood-red streamers,
The reeds began the strain.
The *vox humana* pealed on high,
The Spring is risen again!

The *vox angelica* replied—*The shadows flee away!*
Our house-beams were of cedar. Come in, with boughs of may!
The *diapason* deepened it—*Before the darkness fall,*
We tell you He is risen again!
Our God hath burst His prison again!
Christ is risen, is risen again; and Love is Lord of all.

THE REPEAL

I DREAMED the Eternal had repealed
His cosmic code of law last night.
Our prayers had made the Unchanging yield.
Caprice was king from depth to height.

On Beachy Head a shouting throng
Had fired a beacon to proclaim
Their licence. With unmeasured song
They proved it, dancing in the flame.

They quarrelled. One desired the sun,
And one desired the stars to shine.
They closed and wrestled and burned as one,
And the white chalk grew red as wine.

The furnace licked and purred and rolled,
A laughing child held up its hands
Like dreadful torches, dropping gold;
For pain was dead at their commands.

The Repeal

Painless and wild as clouds they burned,
  Till the restricted Rose of Day
With all its glorious laws returned,
  And the wind blew their ashes away.

THE SACRED OAK

(*A Song of Britain*)

I

VOICE of the summer stars that, long ago,
Sang thro' the old oak-forests of our isle,
Enchanted voice, pure as her falling snow,
Dark as her storms, bright as her sunniest smile,
Taliessin, voice of Britain, the fierce flow
Of fourteen hundred years has whelmed not thee!
Still art thou singing, lavrock of her morn,
Singing to heaven in that first golden glow,
Singing above her mountains and her sea.
Not older yet are grown
Thy four winds in their moan
For Urien. Still thy charlock blooms in the billowing corn.

The Sacred Oak

II

Thy dew is bright upon this beechen spray.
Spring wakes thy harp! I hear—I see—again,
Thy wild steeds foaming thro' the crimson fray
The raven on the white breast of thy slain,
The tumult of thy chariots, far away,
The weeping in the glens, the lustrous hair
Dishevelled o'er the stricken eagle's fall,
And in thy Druid groves, at fall of day
One gift that Britain gave her valorous there,
One gift of lordlier pride
Than aught—save to have died—
One spray of the sacred oak, they coveted most of all.

III

I watch thy nested brambles growing green:
O strange, across that misty waste of years,
To glimpse the shadowy thrush that thou hast seen,
To touch, across the ages, touch with tears
The ferns that hide thee with their fairy screen,
Or only hear them rustling in the dawn;
And—as a dreamer waking—in thy words,

For all the golden clouds that drowse between,
To feel the veil of centuries withdrawn,
To feel thy sun re-risen
Unbuild our shadowy prison
And hear on thy fresh boughs the carol of waking birds.

IV

O, happy voice, born in that far, clear time,
Over thy single harp thy simple strain
Attuned all life for Britain to the chime
Of viking oars and the sea's dark refrain,
And thine own beating heart, and the sublime
Measure to which the moons and stars revolve
Untroubled by the storms that, year by year,
In ever-swelling symphonies still climb
To embrace our growing world and to resolve
Discords unknown to thee,
In the infinite harmony
Which still transcends our strife and leaves us darkling here.

. . . . . .

V

For, now, one sings of heaven and one of hell,
One soars with hope, one plunges to despair.
This, trembling, doubts if aught be ill or well;
And that cries "fair is foul and foul is fair;"
And this cries "forward, though I cannot tell
Whither, and all too surely all things die;"
And that sighs "rest, then, sleep and take thine ease,"
One sings his country and one rings its knell,
One hymns mankind, one dwarfs them with the sky!
O, Britain, let thy soul
Once more command the whole,
Once more command the strings of the world-wide harmony.

VI

For hark! One sings *The gods, the gods are dead!*
Man triumphs! And hark—*Blind Space his funeral urn!*

And hark, one whispers with reverted head
To the old dead gods—*Bring back our heaven, return!*
And hark, one moans—*The ancient order is fled,*
We are children of blind chance and vacant dreams!
Heed not mine utterance—that was chance-born too!
And hark, the answer of Science—*All they said,*
Your fathers, in that old time, lit by gleams
Of what their hearts could feel,
The rolling years reveal
As fragments of one law, one covenant, simply true.

VII

I find, she cries, *in all this march of time*
And space, no gulf, no break, nothing that mars
Its unity. I watch the primal slime
Lift Athens like a flower to greet the stars!
I flash my messages from clime to clime,
I link the increasing world from depth to height!
Not yet ye see the wonder that draws nigh,

When at some sudden contact, some sublime
Touch, as of memory, all this boundless night
Wherein ye grope entombed
Shall, by that touch illumed,
Like one electric City shine from sky to sky.

VIII

No longer then the memories that ye hold
Dark in your brain shall slumber. Ye shall see
That City whose gates are more than pearl or gold
And all its towers firm as Eternity.
The stones of the earth have cried to it from of old!
Why will ye turn from Him who reigns above
Because your highest words fall short? Kneel —call
On Him whose Name—I AM—doth still enfold
Past, present, future, memory, hope and love!
No seed falls fruitless there.
Beyond your Father's care—
The old covenant still holds fast—no bird, no leaf can fall.

IX

O Time, thou mask of the ever-living Soul,
Thou veil to shield us from that blinding Face,
Thou'rt wearing thin! We are nearer to the goal
When man no more shall need thy saving grace,
But all the folded years like one great scroll
Shall be unrolled in the omnipresent Now,
And He that saith *I AM* unseal the tomb.
Nearer His thunders and His trumpets roll,
I catch the gleam that lit thy lifted brow,
O singer whose wild eyes
Possess these April skies,
I touch—I clasp thy hands thro' all the clouds of doom.

X

Teach thou our living choirs amid the sound
Of their tempestuous chords once more to hear
That harmony wherewith the whole is crowned,
The singing heavens that sphere by choral sphere

Break open, height o'er height, to the utmost bound
Of passionate thought! O, as this glorious land,
This sacred country shining on the sea
Grows mightier, let not her clear voice be drowned
In the fierce waves of faction. Let her stand
A beacon to the blind,
A signal to mankind!
A witness to the heavens' profoundest unity.

XI

Her altars are forgotten and her creeds
Dust, and her soul foregoes the lesser Cross!
O, point her to the greater! Her heart bleeds
Still, where men simply feel some vague deep loss;
Their hands grope earthward, knowing not what she needs!
We would not call her back in this great hour!
Nay, upward, onward, to the heights untrod

Signal us, living voices, by those deeds
Of all her deathless heroes, by the Power
That still, still walks her waves,
Still chastens her, still saves,
Signal us, not to the dead, but to the living God.

XII

Signal us with that watchword of the deep,
The watchword that her boldest seamen gave
The winds of the unknown ocean-sea to keep,
When round their oaken walls the midnight wave
Heaved and subsided in gigantic sleep,
And they plunged Westward with her flag unfurled!
Hark, o'er their cloudy sails and glimmering spars,
The watch cries, as they proudly onward sweep,—
Before the world . . . All's well! . . . Before the world . . .
From mast to calling mast
The counter-cry goes past—
Before the world was God!—it rings against the stars.

XIII

Signal us o'er the little heavens of gold
With that heroic signal Nelson knew
When, thro' the thunder and flame that round him rolled
He pointed to the dream that still held true !
Cry o'er the warring nations, cry as of old
A little child shall lead them ! they shall be
One people under the shadow of God's wing !
There shall be no more weeping ! Let it be told
That Britain set one foot upon the sea,
One foot on the earth ! Her eyes
Burned thro' the conquered skies,
And, as the angel of God, she bade the whole world sing.

XIV

A dream ? Nay, have ye heard or have ye known
That the everlasting God who made the ends
Of all creation wearieth ? His worlds groan
Together in travail still. Still He descends

From heaven. The increasing worlds are still
His throne
And His creative Calvary and His tomb
Through which He sinks, dies, triumphs
with each and all,
And ascends, multitudinous and at one
With all the hosts of His evolving doom,
His vast redeeming strife,
His everlasting life,
His love, beyond which not one bird, one
leaf can fall.

XV

And hark, His whispers thro' creation flow,
Lovest thou Me? His nations answer "yea!"
And—*Feed my lambs*, His voice as long ago
Steals from that highest heaven, how far
away!
And yet again saith—*Lovest thou Me?* and "O
Thou knowest we love Thee," passionately
we cry:
But, heeding not our tumult, out of the
deep

The great grave whisper, pitiful and low,
Breathes—*Feed My sheep ;* and yet once more
the sky
Thrills with that deep strange plea,
Lovest thou, lovest thou Me ?
And our lips answer " yea " ; but our God—
Feed My sheep.

XVI

O sink not yet beneath the exceeding weight
Of splendour, thou still single-hearted voice
Of Britain. Droop not earthward now to freight
Thy soul with fragments of the song, rejoice
In no faint flights of music that create
Low heavens o'er-arched by skies without a star,
Nor sink in the easier gulfs of shallower pain !
Sing thou in the whole majesty of thy fate,
Teach us thro' joy, thro' grief, thro' peace,
thro' war,
With single heart and soul
Still, still to seek the goal,
And thro' our perishing heavens, point us to
Heaven again.

The Sacred Oak

XVII

Voice of the summer stars that long ago
Sang thro' the old oak-forests of our isle,
An ocean-music that thou ne'er couldst know
Storms Heaven—O, keep us steadfast all the while;
Not idly swayed by tides that ebb and flow,
But strong to embrace the whole vast symphony
Wherein no note (no bird, no leaf) can fall
Beyond His care, to enfold it all as though
Thy single harp were ours, its unity
In battle like one sword,
And O, its one reward
One spray of the sacred oak, still coveted most of all.

THE TRUMPET OF THE LAW

(*Phi Beta Kappa Poem, read at Harvard University*, 1915)

MUSIC is dead. An age, an age is dying!
Shreds of Uranian song, wild symphonies
Tortured by moans of butchered innocents,
Blow past us on the wind. Chaos resumes
His kingdom. All the visions of the world,
The visions that were music, being shaped
By law, moving in measure, treading the road
That suns and systems tread, O who can hear
Their music now? Urania bows her head.

Only the feet that move in order dance,
Only the mind attuned to that dread pulse
Of law, throughout the universe, can sing.
Only the soul that plays its rhythmic part
In that great measure of the tides and suns
Terrestrial and celestial, till it soar
Into the supreme melodies of heaven,

The Trumpet of the Law

Only that soul, climbing the splendid road
Of law, from height to height, may walk with God,
Shape its own sphere from chaos, conquer death,
Lay hold on life and liberty, and sing.

Yet, since at least, the fleshly heart must beat
In measure, and no new rebellion breaks
That old restriction, murmurs reach it still,
Rumours of that vast music which resolves
Our discords, and to this, to this attuned,
Though blindly, it responds, in notes like these :

There was a song in heaven of old,
  A song the choral seven began,
When God with all His chariots rolled
  The tides of chaos back for man,
When suns revolved and planets wheeled,
  And the great oceans ebbed and flowed,
There is one way of life, it pealed,
  The road of law, the unchanging road.

The Trumpet of the Law resounds
  And we behold, from depth to height,
What glittering sentries walk their rounds,
  What ordered hosts patrol the night,

The Trumpet of the Law

While wheeling worlds proclaim to us,
  Captained by Thee, thro' nights unknown,—
Glory that would be glorious
  Must keep Thy law to find its own.

Beyond rebellion, past caprice,
  From heavens that comprehend all change,
All space, all time, till time shall cease,
  The Trumpet rings to souls that range,
To souls that in wild dreams annul
  Thy word, confessed by wood and stone,—
Beauty that would be beautiful
  Must keep Thy law to find its own.

He that can shake it, will he thrust
  His careless hands into the fire ?
He that would break it, shall we trust
  The sun to rise at his desire ?
Constant above our discontent,
  The Trumpet peals in sterner tone,—
Might that would be omnipotent
  Must keep Thy law to find its own.

The Trumpet of the Law

Ah, though beneath unpitying spheres
  Unreckoned seems our human cry,
In Thy deep law, beyond the years,
  Abides the Eternal memory.
Thy law is light, to eyes grown dull
  Dreaming of worlds like bubbles blown ;
And Mercy that is merciful
  Shall keep Thy law and find its own.

Unchanging God, by that one Light
  Through which we grope to Truth and Thee,
Confound not yet our day with night,
  Break not the measures of Thy sea.
Hear not, though grief for chaos cry
  Or rail at Thine unanswering throne.
Thy law, Thy law, is Liberty
  And, in Thy law we find our own.

So, to Uranian music, rose our world.
The boughs put forth, the young leaves groped for
  light.
The wild flower spread its petals as in prayer.
Then, for terrestrial ears, vast discords rose,—
The struggle in the jungle, clashing themes

That strove for mastery ; but, above them all,
Ever the mightier measure of the suns
Resolved them into broader harmonies,
That fought again for mastery. The night
Buried the mastodon. The warring tribes
Of men were merged in nations. Wider laws
Embraced them. Man no longer fought with man,
Though nation warred with nation. Hatred fell
Before the gaze of love. For in an hour
When, by the law of might, mankind could rise
No higher, into the deepening music stole,
A loftier theme, a law that gathered all
The laws of earth into its broadening breast
And moved like one full river to the sea,
The law of Love. The sun stood dark at noon ;
Dark as the moon before this mightier power,
And a Voice rang across the blood-stained earth,
I am the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Light.

We heard it, and we did not hear. In dreams
We caught a thousand fragments of the strain,
But never wholly heard it. We moved on,
Obeying it a little, till our world

Became so vast, that we could only hear
Stray notes, a golden phrase, a sorrowful cry,
Never the rounded glory of the whole.
So one would sing of death, one of despair,
And one, knowing that God was more than man,
Knowing that the Eternal Power, behind
Our universe, was more than man, would shrink
From crowning Him with human attributes,
And so bereft Him of the highest we knew,
Love, justice, thought, and personality,
And made Him less than man ; made Him a blind
Unweeting force, less than the best in man,
Less than the best that He Himself had made.

Yet though from earth we could no longer hear,
As from a central throne, the harmonies
Of the revolving whole ; yet though from earth
And from earth's Calvary the central scene
Withdrew to dreadful depths beyond our ken—
Withdrew to some deep Calvary at the heart
Of all creation ; yet, O yet, we heard
Hints of that awful music from afar,
Echoes that murmured from eternity,
I am the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Light !

And still the eternal passion undiscerned
Moved like a purple shadow through our world ;
While we, in intellectual chaos, raised
The ancient cry, *Not this man, but Barabbas !*
Then Might grew Right once more, for who could hold
The Right, when the rebellious hearts of men,
Finding the Law too hard in life and thought
And art, proclaimed that right was born of chance,
Born out of nothingness and doomed at last
To nothingness ; while all that men have held
Better than dust—love, honour, justice, truth—
Was less than dust, for the blind dust endures ;
But love, they said, and the proud soul of man,
Die with the breath, before the flesh decays.
And still, amidst the chaos, Love was born
Suffered and died ; and in a myriad forms,
A myriad parables of the Eternal Christ
Unfolded their deep message to mankind.
So, on this last wild winter of His birth,
Though cannon rocked His cradle, heaven might hear,
Once more, the Mother and her infant child.

The Trumpet of the Law

Will the Five Clock-Towers chime to-night?
—Child, the red earth would shake with scorn.—
But will the Emperors laugh outright
If Roland rings that Christ is born?—

No belfries pealed for that pure birth.
There were no high-stalled choirs to sing.
The blood of children smoked on earth;
For Herod, in those days, was king.—

O, *then the Mother and her Son*
Were refugees that Christmas, too?—
Through all the ages, little one,
That strange old story still comes true.—

Was there no peace in Bethlehem?—
Yes. There was Love in one poor inn;
And, while His wings were over them,
They heard those deeper songs begin.—

What songs were they? What songs were they?
Did stars of shrapnel shed their light?—
O, little child, I have lost the way,
I cannot find that inn to-night.—

The Trumpet of the Law

Is there no peace, then, anywhere?—
Perhaps, where some poor soldier lies
With all his wounds in front, out there.—
You weep?—He had your innocent eyes.—

Then is it true that Christ's a slave,
Whom all these wrongs can never rouse?—
They said it. But His anger drave
The money-changers from His House.—

Yet He forgave and turned away.—
Yes, unto seventy times and seven.
But they forget. He comes one day
In power, among the clouds of heaven.—

The Roland rings?—Yes, little son,
With iron hammers they dare not scorn.
Roland is breaking them, gun by gun.
Roland is ringing. Christ is born.

Born and re-born ; for though the Christ we knew
On earth be dead for ever, who shall kill
The Eternal Christ whose law is in our hearts,
Christ, who in this dark hour descends to hell,

And ascends into heaven, and sits beside
The right hand of the Father. If for men
His law be dead, it lives for children still,
Children whom men have butchered see His face,
Rest in His arms, and strike our mockery dumb.
So shall the Trumpet of the Law resound
Through all the ages, telling of that child
Whose outstretched arms in Belgium speak for
God.

They crucified a Man of old,
The thorns are shrivelled on His brow.
Prophet or fool or God, behold,
They crucify Thy children now!
They doubted evil, doubted good,
And the eternal heavens as well.
Behold, the iron and the blood,
The visible handiwork of Hell.

Fast to the cross they found it there,
They found it in the village street,—
A naked child, with sun-kissed hair,
The nails were through its hands and feet.

The Trumpet of the Law

For Christ was dead, yes, Christ was dead !
O Lamb of God, O, little one,
I kneel before your cross instead,
And the same shadow veils the sun. . . .

And the same shadow veils the sun.

And they, who did this deed, had they been wronged
Were offered justice, and not once, nor twice,
But many times ; and they rejected it
For this, to slaughter and to crucify.
O, yet in this dark hour of agony
Those thin sad outstretched arms conquer the world.
And we believe, help thou our unbelief,
That since the noblest part of man is less
Than that eternal Fount from which it came,
There is a Power above the mightiest State,
The unconquerable minister of law,
Which shall dispense the justice they deny
And show the mercy that they have not shown.

The Trumpet of the Law

And you, O land, O beautiful land of Freedom,
Hold fast the faith which made and keeps you
great.
With you, with you abide the faith and hope,
In this dark hour, of agonised mankind.
Hold to that law whereby the warring tribes
Were merged in nations, hold to that wide law
Which bids you merge the nations, here and now,
Into one people. Hold to that deep law
Whereby we reach the peace which is not death
But the triumphant harmony of Life,
Eternal Life, immortal Love, the peace
Of worlds that sing around the throne of God.

A SPELL

(*An Excellent Way to get a Fairy*)

GATHER, first, in your left hand
(This must be at fall of day)
Forty grains of wild sea-sand
Where you think a mermaid lay.
I have heard that it is best
If you gather it, warm and sweet,
Out of the dint of her left breast
Where you see her heart has beat.

Out of the dint in that sweet sand
Gather forty grains, I say;
Yet—if it fail you—understand,
There remains a better way.

Out of this you melt your glass
While the veils of night are drawn,
Whispering, till the shadows pass,
"*Nixie—pixie—leprechaun!*"

A Spell

Then you blow your magic vial,
  Shape it like a crescent moon,
Set it up and make your trial,
  Singing, "*Elaby, ah, come soon!*"

Round the cloudy crescent go,
  On the hill-top, in the dawn,
Singing softly, on tip-toe,
  "*Elaby Gathon! Elaby Gathon!*
Nixie—pixie—leprechaun!"

Bring the blood of a white hen
  Slaughtered at the break of day,
While the cock, in the fairy glen,
  Thrusts his gold neck every way,
Over the brambles, peering, calling,
  Under the ferns, with a sudden fear,
Far and wide—as the dews are falling—
  Clamouring, calling, everywhere.

Round the crimson vial go,
  On the hill-top, in the dawn,
Singing softly, on tip-toe
  "*Nixie—pixie—leprechaun!*"
If this fail, at break of day,
I can show you a better way.

A Spell

Bring the buds of the hazel-copse,
  Where two lovers kissed at noon ;
Bring the crushed red wild-thyme tops
  Where they murmured under the moon.
Bring the four-leaved clover also,
  One of the white, and one of the red,
Bring the flakes of the May that fall so
  Lightly over their bridal bed.

Drop them into the vial—so—
  On the hill-top, in the dawn,
Singing softly, on tip-toe,
  " Nixie—pixie—leprechaun ! "
And, if once will not suffice,
    Do it thrice !
If this fail, at break of day,
  There remains a better way.

Bring an old and crippled child
  —Ah, tread softly, on tip-toe !—
Tattered, tearless, wonder-wild,
  From that under-world below,

A Spell

Bring a wizened child of seven
  Reeking from the City slime,
Out of hell into your heaven,
  Set her knee-deep in the thyme.

Feed her—clothe her—even so!
  Set her on a fairy-throne.
When her eyes begin to glow
  Leave her for an hour—alone.

You shall need no spells or charms,
  On that hill-top, in that dawn.
When she lifts her wasted arms,
  You shall see a veil withdrawn.
There shall be no veil between them,
  Though her head be old and wise!
You shall know that she has seen them
  By the glory in her eyes.

Round her irons on that hill
  Earth has tossed a fairy fire:
Watch, and listen, and be still,
  Lest you baulk your own desire.

A Spell

When she sees four azure wings
  Light upon her claw-like hand ;
When she lifts her head and sings,
  You shall hear and understand :
You shall hear a bugle calling
  Wildly over the dew-dashed down ;
And a sound as of the falling
  Ramparts of a conquered town.

You shall hear a sound like thunder ;
And a veil shall be withdrawn,
When her eyes grow wide with wonder
On that hill-top, in that dawn.

CRIMSON SAILS

WHEN Salomon sailed from Ophir . . . .
The clouds of Sussex thyme
That crown the cliffs in mid-July
Were all we needed—you and I—
But Salomon sailed from Ophir,
And broken bits of rhyme
Blew to us on the white chalk coast
From O, what elfin clime ?

A peacock butterfly flaunted
Its four great crimson wings,
As over the edge of the chalk it flew
Black as a ship on the Channel blue . . . .
When Salomon sailed from Ophir,—
He brought, as the high sun brings,
Honey and spice to the Queen of the South,
Sussex or Saba, a song for her mouth,

Crimson Sails

Sweet as the dawn-wind over the downs
And the tall white cliffs that the wild thyme crowns
A song that the whole sky sings :—

When Salomon sailed from Ophir,
With Olliphants and gold,
The kings went up, the kings went down,
Trying to match King Salomon's crown,
But Salomon sacked the sunset,
Wherever his black ships rolled.
He rolled it up like a crimson cloth,
And crammed it into his hold.

Chorus : Salomon sacked the sunset !
Salomon sacked the sunset !
He rolled it up like a crimson cloth,
And crammed it into his hold.

His masts were Lebanon cedars,
His sheets were singing blue,
But that was never the reason why
He stuffed his hold with the sunset sky !

Crimson Sails

The kings could cut their cedars,
And sail from Ophir, too ;
But Salomon packed his heart with dreams,
And all the dreams were true.

Chorus : The kings could cut their cedars,
Cut their Lebanon cedars ;
But Salomon packed his heart with dreams,
And all the dreams were true.

When Salomon sailed from Ophir,
He sailed not as a king.
The kings—they weltered to and fro,
Tossed wherever the winds could blow ;
But Salomon's tawny seamen
Could lift their heads and sing,
Till all their crowded clouds of sail
Grew sweeter than the Spring.

Chorus : Their singing sheets grew sweeter,
Their crowded clouds grew sweeter,
For Salomon's tawny seamen, sirs,
Could lift their heads and sing :

Crimson Sails

When Salomon sailed from Ophir
With crimson sails so tall,
The kings went up, the kings went down,
Trying to match King Salomon's crown ;
But Salomon brought the sunset,
To hang on his Temple wall ;
He rolled it up like a crimson cloth,
So his was better than all.

Chorus : Salomon gat the sunset
Salomon gat the sunset
He carried it like a crimson cloth
To hang on his Temple wall.

THE RIVER OF STARS

(A tale of Niagara)

THE lights of a hundred cities are fed by its
midnight power.
Their wheels are moved by its thunder. But they,
too, have their hour.
The tale of the Indian lovers, a cry from the years
that are flown,
While the river of stars is rolling,
Rolling away to the darkness,
Abides with the power in the midnight, where love
may find its own.

She watched from the Huron tents, till the first
star shook in the air.
The sweet pine scented her fawn-skins, and
breathed from her braided hair.

Her crown was of dark blue wampum, because
of the tryst she would keep,
Beyond the river of beauty
That drifted away in the darkness
Drawing the sunset thro' lilies, with eyes like
stars, to the deep.

He watched, like a tall young wood-god, from
the red pine that she named ;
But not for the peril behind him, where the eyes
of the Mohawks flamed.
Eagle-plumed he stood. But his heart was
hunting afar,
Where the river of longing whispered . . . .
And one swift shaft from the darkness
Felled him, her name in his death-cry, his eyes
on the sunset star.

. . . . . .

She stole from the river and listened. The
moon on her wet skin shone.
As a silver birch in a pine-wood, her beauty
flashed and was gone.

The River of Stars

There was no wave in the forest. The dark arms
closed her round.
But the river of life went flowing,
Flowing away to the darkness,
For her breast grew red with his heart's blood, in
a night where the stars are drowned.

Teach me, O my lover, as you taught me of love
in a day,
Teach me of death, and for ever, and set my feet
on the way,
To the land of the happy shadows, the land where
you are flown.
—And the river of death went weeping,
Weeping away to the darkness.—
Is the hunting good, my lover, so good that you
hunt alone?

She rose to her feet like a shadow. She sent a
cry thro' the night,
Sa-sa-kuon, the death-whoop, that tells of triumph
in fight.

It broke from the bell of her mouth like the cry
of a wounded bird,
But the river of agony swelled it
And swept it along to the darkness,
And the Mohawks, couched in the darkness,
leapt to their feet as they heard.

Close as the ring of the clouds that menace the
moon with death,
At once they circled her round. Her bright
breast panted for breath.
With only her own wild glory keeping the wolves
at bay,
While the river of parting whispered,
Whispered away to the darkness,
She looked in their eyes for a moment, and
strove for a word to say.

Teach me, O my lover!—She set her foot on the
dead.
She laughed on the painted faces with their
rings of yellow and red,—

I thank you, wolves of the Mohawk, for a woman's hands might fail.—
—And the river of vengeance chuckled,
Chuckled away to the darkness,—
But ye have killed where I hunted. I have come to the end of my trail.

I thank you, braves of the Mohawk, who laid this thief at my feet.
He tore my heart out living, and tossed it his dogs to eat.
Ye have taught him of death in a moment, as he taught me of love in a day.
—And the river of passion deepened,
Deepened and rushed to the darkness.—
And yet may a woman requite you, and set your feet on the way.

For the woman that spits in my face, and the shaven heads that gibe,
This night shall a woman show you the tents of the Huron tribe.

They are lodged in a deep valley. With all things good it abounds.
Where the red-eyed, green-mooned river
Glides like a snake to the darkness,
I will show you a valley, Mohawks, like the Happy Hunting Grounds.

Follow! They chuckled, and followed like wolves to the glittering stream.
Shadows obeying a shadow, they launched their canoes in a dream.
Alone, in the first, with the blood on her breast, and her dark blue crown,
She stood. She smiled at them, *Follow*,
Then urged her canoe to the darkness,
And, silently flashing their paddles, the Mohawks followed her down.

. . . . . .

And now—as they slid thro' the pine-woods with their peaks of midnight blue,
She heard, in the broadening distance, the deep sound that she knew,

A mutter of steady thunder that grew as they glanced along ;
But ever she glanced before them
And danced away to the darkness,
And or ever they heard it rightly, she raised her voice in a song :—

The wind from the Isles of the Blesséd, it blows across the foam.
It sings in the flowing maples of the land that was my home.
Where the moose is a morning's hunt, and the buffalo feeds from the hand.—
And the river of mockery broadened,
Broadened and rolled to the darkness—
And the green maize lifts its feathers, and laughs the snow from the land.

The river broadened and quickened. There was nought but river and sky.
The shores were lost in the darkness. She laughed and lifted a cry :

Follow me! Sa-sa-kuon! Swifter and swifter they swirled—
And the flood of their doom went flying,
Flying away to the darkness,
Follow me, follow me, Mohawks, ye are shooting the edge of the world.

They struggled like snakes to return. Like straws they were whirled on her track.
For the whole flood swooped to that edge where the unplumbed night dropt black,
The whole flood dropt to a thunder in an unplumbed hell beneath,
And over the gulf of the thunder
A mountain of spray from the darkness
Rose and stood in the heavens, like a shrouded image of death.

She rushed like a star before them. The moon on her glorying shone.
Teach me, O my lover,—her cry flashed out and was gone.

A moment they battled behind her. They lashed with their paddles and lunged;
Then the Mohawks, turning their faces
Like a blood-stained cloud to the darkness,
Over the edge of Niagara swept together and plunged.

And the lights of a hundred cities are fed by the ancient power;
But a cry returns with the midnight; for they, too, have their hour.
Teach me, O my lover, as you taught me of love in a day,
—While the river of stars is rolling,
Rolling away to the darkness,—
Teach me of death, and for ever, and set my feet on the way!

A KNIGHT OF OLD JAPAN

MAKE me a stave of song, the Master said,
On yonder cherry-bough, whose white and red
Hangs in the sunset over those green seas.
The young knight looked upon his untried blade,
Then shrugged his wings of gold and blue brocade:
How should a warrior play with thoughts like these?

Fresh from the battle, in that self-same hour,
A mail-clad warrior watched each delicate flower
Close in that cloud of beauty against the West.
Drinking the last deep light, he watched it long.
He raised his face as if to pray. *The strong,*
The Master whispered, *are the tenderest.*

BEYOND DEATH

I

IN lonely bays
Where Love runs wild,
All among the flowering grasses,
Where light, light, light, as a sea-bird's wing
The chuckle of the child-god passes,
O, to awake, to shake away the night
And find you dreaming there,
On the other side of death, with the sea-wind
blowing round you,
And the scent of the thyme in your hair.

II

Tho' beauty perish,
Perish like a flower,
And song be an idle breath,

Beyond Death

Tho' heaven be a dream, and youth for but an hour,
And life much less than death,
And the Maker less than that He made,
And hope less than despair,
If Death have shores where Love runs wild
I think you might be there.

III

Re-born, re-born
From the splendid sea,
There should you awake and sing,
With every supple sweet from the head to the feet
Modelled like a wood-dove's wing,—
O, to awake, to shake away the night,
And find you happy there,
On the other side of death, with the sea-wind blowing round you,
And the scent of the thyme in your hair.

THE STRANGE GUEST

YOU cannot leave a new house
With any open door,
But a strange guest will enter it
And never leave it more.

Build it on a waste land,
Dreary as a sin.
Leave her but a broken gate,
And Beauty will come in.

Build it all of scarlet brick.
Work your wicked will.
Dump it on an ash-heap
Then—O then, be still.

Sit and watch your new house.
Leave an open door.
A strange guest will enter it
And never leave it more.

The Strange Guest

She will make your raw wood
  Mellower than gold.
She will take your new lamps
  And sell them for old.

She will crumble all your pride,
  Break your folly down.
Much that you rejected
  She will bless and crown.

She will rust your naked roof,
  Split your pavement through,
Dip her brush in sun and moon
  And colour it anew.

Leave her but a window
  Wide to wind and rain,
You shall find her foot-steps
  When you come again.

Though she keep you waiting
  Many months or years,
She shall stain and make it
  Beautiful with tears.

The Strange Guest

She shall hurt and heal it,
  Soften it and save,
Blessing it, until it stand
  Stronger than the grave.

You cannot leave a new house
  With any open door,
But a strange guest will enter it
  And never leave it more.

GHOSTS

OTO creep in by candle-light,
When all the world is fast asleep,
Out of the cold winds, out of the night,
Where the nettles wave and the rains weep !
O, to creep in, lifting the latch
So quietly that no soul could hear,
And, at those embers in the gloom,
Quietly light one careful match—
You should not hear it, have no fear—
And light the candle and look round
The old familiar room ;
To see the old books upon the wall
And lovingly take one down again,
And hear—O, strange to those that lay
So patiently underground—
The ticking of the clock, the sound
Of clicking embers . . .
watch the play

Ghosts

Of shadows . . .
till the implacable call
Or morning turn our faces grey ;
And, or ever we go, we lift and kiss
Some idle thing that your hands may touch,
Some paper or book that your hands let fall,
And we never—when living—had cared so much
As to glance upon twice . . .
But now, O bliss
To kiss and to cherish it, moaning our pain,
Ere we creep to the silence again.

THE DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

DAZZLE of the sea, azure of the sky, glitter
of the dew on the grass,
Pass to Oblivion
In the darkness
With all that ever is or ever was.

Yet, O flocks of cloud with your violet shadows,
O white may crowding o'er the lane,
The Shepherd that drives you
To the darkness
Shall lead you thro' the crimson dawn again.

Bear your load of beauty to the sunset, and the
golden gates of death.
The Eternal shall remember
In the darkness
And recall you at a word, at a breath.

The Day of Remembrance

Even as the mind of a man may remember his
lost and linkless hours,
This world that is scattered
To the darkness
Dismembered and dis-petalled, clouds and
flowers,

Cities, suns, and systems, as He said of old, they
sleep! Not a bird, not a leaf shall
pass by,
But on the day of remembrance
In the darkness,
In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,

They shall flash to their places in the music of
the whole, even as our fathers said!
For a Power shall remember
In the darkness,
And the universal sea give up her dead.

THE HILL-FLOWERS

I

MOVING through the dew, moving through the dew,
Ere I waken in the city—Life, thy dawn makes all things new!
And up a fir-clad glen, far from all the haunts of men,
Up a glen among the mountains, O, my feet are wings again!

Moving through the dew, moving through the dew,
O mountains of my boyhood, I come again to you,
By the little path I know, with the sea far below,
And above, the great cloud-galleons with their sails of rose and snow;

The Hill-Flowers

As of old, when all was young, and the earth a
song unsung,
And the heather through the crimson dawn its
Eden incense flung
From the mountain-heights of joy, for a careless-
hearted boy,
And the lavrocks rose like fountain sprays of
bliss that ne'er could cloy,

From their little beds of bloom, from the golden
gorse and broom,
With a song to God the Giver, o'er that waste
of wild perfume ;
Blowing from height to height, in a glory of
great light,
While the cottage-clustered valleys held the lilac
last of night,

So, when dawn is in the skies, in a dream, a
dream, I rise,
And I follow my lost boyhood to the heights of
Paradise.

Life, thy dawn makes all things new! Hills of
Youth, I come to you,
Moving through the dew, moving through the
dew.

II

Moving through the dew, moving through the
dew,
Floats a brother's face to meet me! Is it you?
Is it you?
For the night I leave behind keeps these dazzled
eyes still blind!
But O, the little hill-flowers, their scent is wise
and kind;

And I shall not lose the way from the darkness
to the day,
While dust can cling as their scent clings to
memory for aye;
And the least link in the chain can recall the whole
again,
And heaven at last resume its far-flung harvests,
grain by grain.

The Hill-Flowers

To the hill-flowers clings my dust, and tho' eyeless Death may thrust
All else into the darkness, in their heaven I put my trust ;
And a dawn shall bid me climb to the little spread of thyme
Where first I heard the ripple of the fountain-heads of rhyme.

And a fir-wood that I know, from dawn to sunset glow,
Shall whisper to a lonely sea, that swings far, far below.
Death, thy dawn makes all things new. Hills of Youth, I come to you,
Moving through the dew, moving through the dew.

ON THE EMBANKMENT

WITHIN, it was colour and laughter,
warmth and wine.
Without, it was darkness, hunger and bitter
cold,
Where those white globes on the wet Embank-
ment shine,
Greasing the Thames with gold.

And was it a bundle of fog in the dark drew nigh ?
A bundle of rags and bones it crept to the
light,—
A monstrous thing that coughed as it shuffled by,
A shape of the shapeless night,

Spawned as brown things that mimic their
mothering earth,
Green creeping things that the grass lifts to
the sun,

On the Embankment

Out of its wrongs the City had brought to the birth
The shape of those wrongs, in one.

A woman, a woman whose lips had once been kissed,
(It was Christmas Eve, and the bells began their chime !)
She sank to a seat like a coughing bundle of mist
Exhaled from the river-slime.

Bells for the birth of Christ! She heard, and she thought—
Vacantly—of her man, that was long since dead,
The smell of the Christmas food, and the drink they had bought
Together, the year they were wed.

She thought of their one-room home, and the night-long sigh
Recalled, as he slept, of his breath in her loosened hair.

On the Embankment

He slept. She opened her haggard eyes with a cry.
But only the night was there.

Nay, out of the formless night, at her furtive glance,
Crouched at the end of her cold wet bench, there grew
A bundle of fog, a bundle of rags that, perchance,
Once was a woman, too.

A huddled shape, a fungus of foul grey mist
Spawned of the river, in peace and much good-will,
And even the woman whose lips had once been kissed
Wondered, it crouched so still.

No breath, no shadow of breath in the lamp-light smoked,
It crouched so still—that bunch at the bench's end.
She stretched her neck like a crow, then leaned and croaked
"*A Merry Christmas, friend!*"

On the Embankment

She rose, and peered, peered at its vacant eyes.
Touched its cold claws. Its arms of knotted bone
Were wands of ice ; like iron rods the thighs ;
The left breast—like a stone.

Far, far along the rows of warmth and light
The Christmas waits, with cornet and bassoon,
Carolled "While shepherds watched their flocks by night."
The bells pealed to the moon.

A bundle of rags and bones, a bundle of mist,
And never a hell or heaven to hear or see,
The woman, the woman whose lips had once been kissed,
Knelt down feverishly.

She plucked the shawl out of that frozen clutch.
The dead are dead. Why should the living freeze ?
She touched the cold flesh that she feared to touch
Kneeling upon her knees.

On the Embankment

Her palsied hands unlaced the shoes—good shoes !—
She tore them quick from the crooked yellow feet.
If Death be generous, why should Life refuse
To take, and pawn, and eat ?

A heavy step drew nearer thro' the mist.
She bundled them into the shawl. Her eyes were bright.
The woman, the woman whose lips had once been kissed,
Slunk, chuckling, thro' the night.

THE IRON CROWN

NOT memory of a vanished bliss,
But suddenly to know,
I had forgotten! This, O this
With iron crowned my woe:

To know that on some midnight sea
Whence none could lift the pall
A drowning hand was waved to me,
Then—swept beyond recall.

ENCELADUS

In the Black Country, from a little window,
Before I slept, across the haggard wastes
Of dust and ashes, I saw Titanic shafts
Like shadowy columns of wan-hope arise
To waste, on the blear sky, their slow sad wreaths
Of smoke, their infinitely sad slow prayers.
Then, as night deepened, the blast-furnaces,
Red smears upon the sulphurous blackness, turned
All that sad region to a City of Dis,
Where naked sweating giants all night long
Bowed their strong necks, melted flesh, blood and bone,
To brim the dry ducts of the gods of gloom
With terrible rivers, branches of living gold.
O, like some tragic gesture of great souls
In agony, those awful columns towered
Against the clouds, that city of ash and slag
Assumed the stature of some direr Thebes
Arising to the death-chant of those gods,

Enceladus

A dreadful Order climbing from the dark
Of Chaos and Corruption, threatening to take
Heaven with its vast slow storm.
I slept, and dreamed.
And like the slow beats of some Titan heart
Buried beneath immeasurable woes,
The huge trip-hammers thudded through the dream:—

Huge on a fallen tree,
Lost in the darkness of primæval woods,
Enceladus, earth-born Enceladus,
The naked giant, brooded all alone.
Born of the lower earth, he knew not how,
Born of the mire and clay, he knew not when,
Brought forth in darkness, and he knew not why!

Thus, like a wind, went by a thousand years.

Anhungered, yet no comrade of the wolf,
And cold, but with no power upon the sun,
A master of this world that mastered him!

Thus, like a cloud, went by a thousand years.

Enceladus

Who chained this other giant in his heart
That heaved and burned like Etna ? Heavily
He bent his brows and wondered and was dumb.

And, like one wave, a thousand years went by.

He raised his matted head and scanned the stars !
He stood erect ! He lifted his uncouth arms !
With inarticulate sounds his uncouth lips
Wrestled and strove—*I am full-fed, and yet*
I hunger !
Who set this fiercer famine in my maw ?
Can I eat moons, gorge on the Milky Way,
Swill sunsets down, or sup the wash of the dawn
Out of the rolling swine-troughs of the sea ?
Can I drink oceans, lie beneath the mountains,
And nuzzle their heavy boulders like a cub
Sucking the dark teats of the tigress ? Who,
Who set this deeper hunger in my heart ?
And the dark forest echoed—*Who ? Ah, who ?*

" *I hunger !* "
And the night-wind answered him,
" Hunt, then, for food ! "

Enceladus

"*I hunger!*"
And the sleek gorged lioness
Drew nigh him, dripping freshly from the kill,
Redder her lolling tongue, whiter her fangs,
And gazed with ignorant eyes of golden flame.

"*I hunger!*"
Like a breaking sea his cry
Swept through the night! Against his swarthy knees
She rubbed the red wet velvet of her ears
With mellow thunders of unweeting bliss,
Purring,—*Ah, seek, and you shall find!*
Ah, seek, and you shall slaughter, gorge—ah, seek,
Seek, seek, you shall feed full—ah seek, ah seek!

Enceladus, earth-born Enceladus,
Bewildered like a desert-pilgrim, saw
A rosy City, opening in the clouds,
The hunger-born mirage of his own heart,
Far, far above the world, a home of gods,
Where One, a goddess, veiled in the sleek waves
Of her deep hair, yet glimmering golden through,
Lifted, with radiant arms, ambrosial food

For hunger such as this ! Up the dark hills,
He rushed, a thunder-cloud,
Urged by the famine of his heart ! He stood
High on the topmost crags, he hailed the gods
In thunder, and the clouds re-echoed it !
He hailed the gods !
And like a sea of thunder round their thrones
Washing, a midnight sea, his earth-born voice
Besieged the halls of heaven ! He hailed the gods !
They laughed, he heard them laugh !
With echo and re-echo, far and wide,
A golden sea of mockery, they laughed !

Enceladus, earth-born Enceladus,
Laid hold upon the rosy gates of heaven,
And shook them with gigantic sooty hands,
Asking he knew not what, but not for alms ;
And the gates opened, opened as in jest ;
And, like a sooty Jest, he stumbled in !

Round him the gods, the young and scornful gods,
Clustered and laughed to mark the ravaged face,

The brutal brows, the deep and dog-like eyes,
The blunt black nails, and back with burdens bowed.
And, when they laughed, he snarled with uncouth lips
And made them laugh again.
"*Whence comest thou?*"
He could not speak!
How should he speak whose heart within him heaved
And burned like Etna? Through his mouth there came
A sound of ice-bergs in a frozen sea
Of tears, a sullen region of black ice
Rending and breaking, very far away.
They laughed!
He stared at them, bewildered, and they laughed
Again, "*Whence comest thou?*"
He could not speak!
But through his mouth a moan of midnight woods,
Where wild beasts lay in wait to slaughter and gorge,
A moan of forest-caverns where the wolf

Brought forth her litter, a moan of the wild
earth
In travail with strange shapes of mire and clay,
Creatures of clay, clay images of the gods,
That hungered like the gods, the most high gods,
But found no food, and perished like the beasts.
And the gods laughed,—
Art thou, then, such a god? And, like a leaf
Unfolding in dark woods, in his deep brain
A sudden memory woke ; and like an ape
He nodded, and all heaven with laughter rocked,
While Artemis cried out with scornful lips,—
Perchance He is the Maker of you all!

Then, piteously outstretching calloused hands,
He sank upon his knees, his huge gnarled knees,
And echoed, falteringly, with slow harsh tongue,—
Perchance, perchance, the Maker of you all!

They wept with laughter! And Aphrodite, she,
With keener mockery than white Artemis
Who smiled aloof, drew nigh him unabashed
In all her blinding beauty. Carelessly
As o'er the brute brows of a stalléd ox

Across that sooty muzzle and brawny breast,
Contemptuously, she swept her golden hair
In one deep wave, a many-millioned scourge
Intolerable and beautiful as fire ;
Then turned and left him, reeling, gasping, dumb,
While heaven re-echoed and re-echoed, *See*,
Perchance, perchance, the Maker of us all !

Enceladus, earth-born Enceladus,
Rose to his feet, and with one terrible cry
" *I hunger*," rushed upon the scornful gods,
And strove to seize and hold them with his hands !
And still the laughter deepened as they rolled
Their clouds around them, baffling him. But once,
Once with a shout, in his gigantic arms
He crushed a slippery splendour on his breast
And felt on his harsh skin the cool smooth peaks
Of Aphrodite's bosom. One black hand
Slid down the naked snow of her long side
And bruised it where he held her. Then, like snow
Vanishing in a furnace, out of his arms

The splendour suddenly melted, and a roll
Of thunder split the dream, and head-long down
He fell, from heaven to earth ; while, overhead
The young and scornful gods—he heard them laugh !—
Toppled the crags down after him. He lay
Supine. They plucked up Etna by the roots
And buried him beneath it. His broad breast
Heaved, like that other giant in his heart,
And through the crater burst his fiery breath,
But could not burst his bonds.
And so he lay
Breathing in agony thrice a thousand years.

Then came a Voice, he knew not whence, "Arise,
Enceladus ! " And from his heart a crag
Fell, and one arm was free, and one thought free,
And suddenly he awoke, and stood upright,
Shaking the mountains from him like a dream ;
And the tremendous light and awful truth
Smote, like the dawn, upon his blinded eyes,
That out of his first wonder at the world,

Enceladus

Out of his own heart's deep humility
And simple worship, he had fashioned gods
Of cloud, and heaven out of a hollow shell.
And groping now no more in the empty space
Outward, but inward in his own deep heart,
He suddenly felt the secret gates of heaven
Open, and from the infinite heavens of hope
Inward, a voice, from the innermost courts of
Love,
Rang—*Thou shalt have none other gods but Me!*

Enceladus, the foul Enceladus,
When the clear light out of that inward heaven
Whose gates are only inward in the soul,
Showed him that one true Kingdom, said
"I will stretch
My hands out once again! And, as the God
That made me is the Heart within my heart,
So shall my heart be to this dust and earth
A god and a creator. I will strive
With mountains, fires and seas, wrestle and
strive,
Fashion and make, and that which I have made
In anguish I shall love as God loves me.

Enceladus

In the Black Country, from a little window,
Waking at dawn, I saw those giant Shafts
—O great dark word out of our elder speech,
Long since the poor man's kingly heritage—
The Shapings, the dim Sceptres of Creation,
The Shafts like columns of wan-hope arise
To waste, on the blear sky, their slow sad wreaths
Of smoke, their infinitely sad slow prayers.
Then, as the dawn crimsoned, the sordid clouds,
The puddling furnaces, the mounds of slag,
The cinders, and the sand-beds and the rows
Of wretched roofs, assumed a majesty
Beyond all majesties of earth or air ;
Beauty beyond all beauty, as of a child
In rags, upraised thro' the still gold of heaven,
With wasted arms and hungering eyes, to bring
The armoured seraphim down upon their knees
And teach eternal God humility ;
The solemn beauty of the unfulfilled
Moving towards fulfilment on a height
Beyond all heights ; the dreadful beauty of hope ;
The naked wrestler struggling from the rock
Under the sculptor's chisel, the rough mass
Of clay more glorious for the poor blind face

Enceladus

And bosom that half emerge into the light,
More glorious and august, even in defeat,
Than that too cold dominion God forswore
To bear this passionate universal load,
This Calvary of Creation, with mankind.

IN MEMORIAM
SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR

FAREWELL! The soft mists of the sunset-sky
Slowly enfold his fading birch-canoe.
Farewell! His dark, his desolate forests cry,
Moved to their vast, their sorrowful depths anew.

Fading? Nay, lifted thro' a heaven of light,
His proud sails brightening thro' that crimson flame,
Leaving us lonely on the shores of night,
Home to Ponemah take his deathless fame.

Generous as a child, so wholly free
From all base pride that fools forgot his crown,
He adored Beauty, in pure ecstasy,
And waived the mere rewards of his renown.

The spark that falls from heaven not oft on earth
To human hearts this vital splendour gives.
His was the simple, true, immortal birth.
Scholars compose ; but *this man's music lives !*

Greater than England or than Earth discerned,
He never paltered with his art for gain :
When many a vaunted crown to dust is turned,
This uncrowned king shall take his throne and reign.

Nations unborn shall hear his forests moan ;
Ages unscanned shall hear his winds lament,
Hear the strange grief that deepened through his own,
The vast cry of a buried continent.

Through him, his race a moment lifted up
Forests of hands to Beauty as in prayer ;
Touched though his lips the sacramental Cup,
And then sank back—benumbed in our bleak air.

Through him, through him, a lost world hailed
the light.
The tragedy of that triumph none can tell,—
So great, so brief, so quickly snatched from sight ;
And yet—O hail, great comrade, not farewell !

. . . . . .

INSCRIPTION

(For the Grave of Coleridge-Taylor)

SLEEP, crowned with fame; fearless of change or time.
Sleep, like remembered music in the soul,
Silent, immortal; while our discords climb
To that great chord which shall resolve the whole.

Silent with Mozart on that solemn shore;
Secure, where neither waves nor hearts can break;
Sleep—till the Master of the World, once more,
Touch the remembered strings, and bid thee wake . . .

Touch the remembered strings, and bid thee wake.

THE TORCH

(Sussex Landscape)

IS it your watch-fire, elves, where the down with its darkening shoulder
Lifts on the death of the sun, out of the valley of thyme ?
Dropt on the broad chalk path, and cresting the ridge of it, smoulder
Crimson as blood on the white, halting my feet as they climb,

Clusters of clover-bloom, spilled from what negligent arms in the tender
Dusk of the great grey world, last of the tints of the day,
Beautiful, sorrowful, strange, last stain of that perishing splendour.
Elves, from what torn white feet, trickled that red on the way ?

The Torch

No—from the sunburnt hands of what lovers
that fade in the distance ?
Here—was it here that they paused ? Here
that the legend was told ?
Even a kiss would be heard in this hush ; but,
with mocking insistence,
Now thro' the valley resound—only the bells
of the fold.

Dropt from the hands of what beautiful throng ?
Did they cry "*Follow after*,"
Dancing into the West, leaving this token
for me,—
Memory dead on the path, and the sunset to bury
their laughter ?
Youth ? Is it youth that has flown ? Dark-
ness covers the sea.

Darkness covers the earth. But the path is
here. I assay it.
Let the bloom fall like a flake, dropt from the
torch of a friend.

The Torch

Beautiful revellers, happy companions, I see
and obey it ;
Follow your torch in the night, follow your
path to the end.

AFTER RAIN

LISTEN! On sweetening air
The blackbird growing bold
Flings out, where green boughs glisten,
Three splashes of wild gold.

Daughter of April, hear!
And sing, O barefoot boy!
That carol of wild sweet water
Has washed the world with joy.

Glisten, O fragrant earth,
Assoiled by heaven anew,
And O, ye lovers listen,
With eyes that glisten, too.

THE WORLD'S WEDDING

"Et quid curae nobis de generibus et speciebus? Ex uno Verbo omnia, et unum loquuntur omnia. Cui omnia unum sunt, quique ad unum omnia trahit et omnia in uno videt, potest stabilis corde esse."—THOMAS À KEMPIS.

I

WHEN poppies fired the nut-brown wheat,
My love went by with sun-stained feet :
I followed her laughter, followed her, followed her, all a summer's morn !
But O, from an elfin palace of air,
A wild bird sang a song so rare,
I stayed to listen and—lost my Fair,
And walked the world forlorn.

II

When chalk shone white between the sheaves,
My love went by as one that grieves ;
I followed her weeping, followed her, followed her, all an autumn noon !

The World's Wedding

The sunset flamed so fierce a red
From North to South—I turned my head
To wonder—and my Fair was fled
Beyond the dawning moon.

III

When bare black boughs were choked with snow,
My love went by, as long ago;
I followed her, dreaming, followed her, followed her, all a winter's night!
But O, along that snow-white track
With thorny shadows printed black,
I saw three kings come riding back,
And—lost my life's delight.

IV

They are so many, and she but One;
And I and she, like moon and sun
So separate ever! Ah yet, I follow her, follow her, faint and far;

For what if all this diverse bliss
Should run together in one kiss !
Swift, Spring, with the sweet clue I miss
Between these several instances,—
The kings, that inn, that star.

V

Between the hawk's and the wood-dove's wing,
My love, my love flashed by like Spring !
The year had finished its golden ring !
Earth, the Gipsy, and Heaven, the King,
Were married like notes in the song I sing,
And O, I followed her, followed her, followed her over the hills of Time,
Never to lose her now I know
For whom the sun was clasped in snow,
The heights linked to the depths below,
The rose's flush to the planet's glow,
Death the friend to life the foe,
The Winter's joy to the Spring's woe,
And the world made one in a rhyme.

OLD GREY SQUIRREL

A GREAT while ago, there was a school-boy.
He lived in a cottage by the sea.
And the very first thing he could remember
Was the rigging of the schooners by the quay.

He could watch them, when he woke, from his window,
With the tall cranes hoisting out the freight.
And he used to think of shipping as a sea-cook,
And sailing to the Golden Gate.

For he used to buy the yellow penny dreadfuls,
And read them where he fished for conger eels,
And listened to the lapping of the water,
The green and oily water round the keels.

There were trawlers with their shark-mouthed
flat-fish,
And red nets hanging out to dry,
And the skate the skipper kept because he liked
'em,
And landsmen never knew the fish to fry.

There were brigantines with timber out of
Norroway,
Oozing with the syrups of the pine.
There were rusty dusty schooners out of Sun-
derland,
And ships of the Blue Cross line.

And to tumble down a hatch into the cabin
Was better than the best of broken rules ;
For the smell of 'em was like a Christmas dinner,
And the feel of 'em was like a box of tools.

And, before he went to sleep in the evening,
The very last thing that he could see
Was the sailor-men a-dancing in the moonlight
By the capstan that stood upon the quay.

Old Grey Squirrel

He is perched upon a high stool in London.
The Golden Gate is very far away.
They caught him, and they caged him, like a squirrel.
He is totting up accounts, and going grey.

He will never, never, never sail to 'Frisco.
But the very last thing that he will see
Will be sailor-men a-dancing in the sunrise
By the capstan that stands upon the quay. . .

To the tune of an old concertina,
By the capstan that stands upon the quay.

THE GREAT NORTH ROAD

JUST as the moon was rising, I met a ghostly pedlar
Singing for company beneath his ghostly load,—
Once, there were velvet lads with vizards on their faces,
Riding up to rob me on the great North Road.

Now, my pack is heavy, and my pocket full of guineas
Chimes like a wedding-peal, but little I enjoy
Roads that never echo to the chirrup of their canter,—
The gay Golden Farmer and the Hereford Boy.

Rogues were they all, but their raid was from Elf-land!
Shod with elfin silver were the steeds they bestrode.

The Great North Road

Merlin buckled on the spurs that wheeled thro' the wet fern
Bright as Jack-o'-Lanthorns off the great North Road.

Tales were told in country inns when Turpin rode to Rippleside!
Puck tuned the fiddle-strings, and country maids grew coy,
Tavern doors grew magical when Colonel Jack might tap at them,
The gay Golden Farmer and the Hereford Boy.

What are you seeking, then? I asked this honest pedlar.
—O, Mulled Sack or Natty Hawes might ease me of my load!—
Where are they flown then?—Flown where I follow;
They are all gone for ever up the great North Road.

Rogues were they all; but the white dust assoils 'em!
Paradise without a spice of deviltry would cloy.

Heavy is my pack till I meet with Jerry Abershaw,
The gay Golden Farmer and the Hereford Boy.

THE OUTLAW

DEEP in the greenwood of my heart
My wild hounds race.
I cloak my soul at feast and mart,
I mask my face ;

Outlawed, but not alone, for Truth
Is outlawed too.
Proud world, you cannot banish us.
We banish *you*.

Go by, go by, with all your din,
Your dust, your greed, your guile,
Proud world, your thrones can never win—
From Her—one smile.

She sings to me in a lonely place,
She takes my hand.
I look into her lovely face
And understand . . .

The Outlaw

Outlawed, but not alone, for Love
  Is outlawed too.
You cannot banish us, proud world.
  We banish *you.*

Now, which is outlawed, which alone ?
  Around us fall and rise
Murmurs of leaf and fern, the moan
  Of Paradise.

Outlawed ? Then hills and woods and streams
  Are outlawed too !
Proud world, from our immortal dreams,
  We banish you.

TO A FRIEND OF BOYHOOD, LOST AT SEA

O WARM blue sky and dazzling sea,
Where have you hid my friend from me?
The white chalk coast, the leagues of surf
Laugh in the sun-light now as then,
And violets in the short sweet turf
Make fragmentary heavens again,
And sea-born wings of rustling snow
Pass and re-pass, as long ago.

Old friend, do you remember yet
The days when secretly we met
In that old harbour, years a-back,
Where I admired your billowing walk,
Or in that perilous fishing-smack
What tarry oaths perfumed your talk,
The sails we set, the ropes we spliced,
The raw potato that we sliced,

To a Friend of Boyhood

For mackerel-bait—and how it shines
Far down, at end of the taut lines !—
  And the great catch we made that day
Loading our boat with rainbows, quick
  And quivering, while you smoked your clay,
And I took home your *Deadwood Dick*
  In yellow and red, when day was done,
  And you took home my Stevenson ?

Not leagues, as when you sailed the deep,
But only some frail bars of sleep
  Divide us now ! Methinks you still
Recall, as I, in dreams, the quay,
  The little port below the hill ;
And all the changes of the sea,
  Like some great music, can but roll
  Our lives still nearer to the goal.

BLIND MOONE OF LONDON

"Dispersed through Shakespeare's plays are innumerable little fragments of ballads, the entire copies of which could not be recovered. Many of these are of the most beautiful and pathetic simplicity."

BLIND MOONE of London
He fiddled up and down,
Thrice for an angel,
And twice for a crown.
He fiddled at the *Green Man*,
He fiddled at the *Rose ;*
And where they have buried him
Not a soul knows.

All his tunes are dead and gone, dead as yesterday.
And his lanthorn flits no more
Round the *Devil Tavern* door,
Waiting till the gallants come, singing from the play ;

Waiting in the wet and cold !
All his Whitsun tales are told.
He is dead and gone, sirs, very far away.

He would not give a silver groat
For good or evil weather.
He carried in his white cap
A long red feather.
He wore a long coat
Of the Reading-tawny kind,
And darned white hosen
With a blue patch behind.

So—one night—he shuffled past, in his buckled shoon.
We shall never see his face,
Twisted to that queer grimace,
Waiting in the wind and rain, till we called his tune ;
Very whimsical and white,
Waiting on a blue Twelfth Night !
He is grown too proud at last—old blind Moone.

Yet, when May was at the door,
And Moone was wont to sing,
Many a maid and bachelor
Whirled into the ring :
Standing on a tilted wain
He played so sweet and loud
The Mayor forgot his golden chain
And jigged it with the crowd.

Old blind Moone, his fiddle scattered flowers along the street ;
Into the dust of Brookfield Fair
Carried a shining primrose air,
Crooning like a poor mad maid, O, very low and sweet,
Drew us close, and held us bound,
Then—to the tune of *Pedlar's Pound*,
Caught us up, and whirled us round, a thousand frolic feet.

Master Shakespeare was his host.
The tribe of Benjamin
Used to call him Merlin's Ghost
At the Mermaid Inn.

He was only a crowder,
Fiddling at the door.
Death has made him prouder.
We shall not see him more.

Only—if you listen, please—through the master's themes,
You shall hear a wizard strain,
Blind and bright as wind and rain
Shaken out of willow-trees, and shot with elfin gleams.
How should I your true love know?
Scraps and snatches—even so!
That is old blind Moone again, fiddling in your dreams.

Once, when Will had called for sack
And bidden him up and play,
Old blind Moone, he turned his back,
Growled, and walked away,
Sailed into a thunder-cloud,
Snapped his fiddle-string,
And hobbled from *The Mermaid*
Sulky as a king.

Only from the darkness now, steals the strain we knew :
No one even knows his grave !
Only here and there a stave,
Out of all his hedge-row flock, be-drips the may with dew.
And I know not what wild bird
Carried us his parting word :—
Master Shakespeare needn't take the crowder's fiddle, too.

Will has wealth and wealth to spare.
Give him back his own.
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.
See his little lanthorn-spark.
Hear his ghostly tune,
Glimmering past you, in the dark,
Old blind Moone !

All the little crazy brooks, where love and sorrow run
Crowned with sedge and singing wild,
Like a sky-lark—or a child !—

Blind Moone of London

Old blind Moone he knew their springs, and played 'em every one ;
Stood there, in the darkness, blind,
And sang them into Shakespeare's mind. . .

Old blind Moone of London, O now his songs are done,
The light upon his lost white face, they say it was the sun !

The light upon his poor old face, they say it was the sun !

THE HEDGE-ROSE OPENS

HOW passionately it opens after rain,
And O, how like a prayer
To those great shining skies! Do they disdain
A bride so small and fair?
See the imploring petals, how they part
And utterly lay bare
The perishing treasures of that piteous heart
In wild surrender there.
What? Would'st *thou*, too, drink up the Eternal bliss,
Ecstatically dare,
O, little bride of God, to invoke *His* kiss?—
But O, how like a prayer!

THE MAY-TREE

THE May-tree on the hill
Stands in the night
So fragrant and so still,
So dusky white,

That, stealing from the wood
In that sweet air,
You'd think Diana stood
Before you there.

If it be so, her bloom
Trembles with bliss.
She waits across the gloom
Her shepherd's kiss.

Touch her. A bird will start
From those pure snows,—
The dark and fluttering heart
Endymion knows.

OLD LETTERS

READ them ? Strangle that sick cry ?
Christ God, no !
Shut the box. Lock the lid.
You'll be safer—so.
Could you read one crookéd word
Scrawled so long ago,
Love would rise before your face
And blind you, like a blow.

Close it ! Quickly ! For I caught,
In a childish hand,
Something that she never thought
I should understand.

So I crouch. And shall our God
Prove Him baser yet,
He who filled her eyes with light
Quite renounce His debt,

Give her worlds to love, and then—
Ere the sun be set,
Strike her down and coffin all ?
Christ, shall *He* forget ?

Close it ! Quickly ! For I caught,
In a childish hand,
Something that she never thought
I should understand.

LAMPS

IMMENSE and silent night,
Over the lonely downs I go ;
And the deep gloom is pricked with points of light
Above me and below.

I cannot break the bars
Of Time and Fate ; and if I scan the sky,
There comes to me, questioning those cold stars,
No signal, no reply.

Yet are they less than these—
These village-lights, which I do scan
Below me, or far out on darkling seas
Those messages from man ?

Round me the darkness rolls.
Out of the depth, each lance of light
Shoots from lost lanthorns, thrills from living souls,
And shall I doubt the height ?

No signal ? No reply ?
As through the deepening night I roam,
Hope opens all her casements in the sky
And lights the lamps of home.

AT EDEN GATES

TO Eden Garden—so the sign-post said ;
I could not see the road ;
But, where the Sussex clover blossomed red
Its runaway blisses flowed.

I traced them back for many a night and day,
—The way she, too, had gone !—
Till lo, the terrible Angel in the way
Inexorably shone.

Up to the Gates, a fearless fool I came ;
Between the lily and rose
Fluttering these evil rags of sordid shame,
A thing to scare the crows.

"And hath the Master given thee, then, no word ?"
The scornful Angel smiled :
Only two souls may pass my Flaming Sword,—
The Lover and the Child.

I raised my head,—"Now let all hell make mirth,
Where Love went, I go, too!"
His eyes met mine. The sword sank to the earth,
And let her lover through.

THE PSYCHE OF OUR DAY

AS constant lovers may rejoice
With seas between, with worlds between,
Because a fragrance and a voice
Are round them everywhere :
So let me travel to the grave,
Believing still—for I have seen—
That Love's triumphant banners wave
Beyond my own despair.

I have no trust in my own worth ;
Yet have I faith, O love, for you,
That every beauty in bloom or leaf,
That even age and wrong
May touch, may hurt you, on this earth,
But only, only as kisses do ;
Or as the fretted string of grief
Completes the bliss of song.

That you shall see, on any grave
  The snow fall, like that unseen hand
Which O, so often, pressed your hair
  To cherish and console :
That seas may roar and winds rave
  But you shall feel and understand
What vast caresses everywhere
  Convey you to the goal.

So was it always in the years
  When Love began, when Love began
With eyes that were not touched of tears
  And lips that still could sing—
And all around us, in the May,
  The child-god with his laughter ran,
And every bloom, on every spray,
  Betrayed his fluttering wing.

So hold it, keep it, count it, sweet,
  Until the end, until the end.
It is not cruelty, but bliss
  That pains and is so fond :

The Psyche of Our Day

Crush life like thyme beneath your feet,
And O, my love, when that strange friend,
The Shadow of Wings, which men call Death
Shall close your eyes, with that last kiss,
Ask not His name. A rosier breath
Shall waken you—beyond.

PARACLETE

TONGUE hath not told it,
Heart hath not known ;
Yet shall the bough swing
When it hath flown.

Dreams have denied it,
Fools forsworn :
Yet it hath comforted
Each man born.

Once and again it is
Blown to me,
Sweet from the wild thyme,
Salt from the sea ;

Blown thro' the ferns
Faint from the sky ;
Shadowed in water,
Yet clear as a cry.

Paraclete

Light on a face,
  Or touch of a hand,
Making my still heart
  Understand.

Earth hath not seen it,
  Nor heaven above.
Yet shall the wild bough
  Bend with the Dove.

Yea, tho' the bloom fall
  Under Thy feet,
Veni, Creator,
  Paraclete !

THE DEATH OF A GREAT MAN

NO—not that he is dead. The pang's not there,
Nor in the City's many-coloured bloom
Of swift black-lettered posters, which the throng
Passes with bovine stare,
To say *He is dead* and *Is it going to rain?*
Or hum stray snatches of a rag-time song.
Nor is it in that falsest shibboleth
(Which orators toss to the dumb scorn of death)
That all the world stands weeping at his tomb.
London is dining, dancing, through it all.
And, in the unchecked smiles along the street
Where men, that slightly knew him, lightly meet,
With all the old indifferent grimaces,
There is no jot of grief, no tittle of pain.
No. No. For nearer things do most tears fall.
Grief is for near and little things. But pride,
O, pride was to be found by two or three,

And glory in his great battling memory,
  Prouder and purer than the loud world knows,
In one more dreadful sign, the day he died—
  The dreadful light upon a thousand faces,
The peace upon the faces of his foes.

THE OLD KNIGHT'S VIGIL

ONCE, in this chapel, Lord,
Young and undaunted,
Over my virgin sword
Lightly I chaunted,—
"Dawn ends my watch. I go
Shining to meet the foe.

"Swift with Thy dawn," I said,
Set the lists ringing!
Soon shall Thy foe be sped,
And the world singing:
Bless my bright plume for me,
Christ, King of Chivalry.

War-worn I kneel to-night,
Lord, at Thine altar.
O, in to-morrow's fight,
Let me not falter.

The Old Knight's Vigil

Bless my dark arms for me,
Christ, King of Chivalry.

Keep Thou my broken sword
  All the long night through
While I keep watch and ward.
  Then, the red fight through,
Bless the wrenched haft for me,
Christ, King of Chivalry.

Keep, in Thy piercéd hands,
  Still the bruised helmet.
Let not their hostile bands
  Wholly o'erwhelm it.
Bless my poor shield for me,
Christ, King of Chivalry.

Keep Thou the sullied mail,
  Lord, that I tender
Here at Thine altar-rail,
  Then—let Thy splendour
Touch it once . . . and I go
Stainless to meet the foe.

THE INNER PASSION

THERE is a Master in my heart
To whom, though oft against my will,
I bring the songs I sing apart
And strive to think that they fulfil
His silent law, within my heart.

But He is blind to my desires,
And deaf to all that I would plead :
He tests my truth at purer fires
And shames my purple with His need.
He claims my deeds, not my desires.

And often when my comrades praise,
I sadden, for He turns from me.
But, sometimes, when they blame, I raise
Mine eyes to His, and in them see
A tenderness too deep for praise.

The Inner Passion

He is not to be bought with gold,
  Or lured by thornless crowns of fame ;
But when some rebel thought hath sold
  Him to dishonour and to shame,
And my heart's Pilate cries " Behold,"

" Behold the Man," I know Him then ;
  And all those wild thronged clamours die
In my heart's judgment hall again,
  Or if it ring with " Crucify ! "
Some few are faithful even then.

Some few sad thoughts,—one bears His cross,
  To that dark Calvary of my pride ;
One stands far off and mourns His loss,
  And one poor thief on either side
Hangs on his own unworthy cross.

And one—O, truth in ancient guise !—
  Rails, and one bids him cease alway,
And the God turns His hungering eyes
  On that poor thought with " Thou, this day,
Shalt sing, shalt sing, in Paradise."

A COUNTRY LANE IN HEAVEN

THE exceeding weight of glory bowed
My head, in that pure clime :
I found a road that ran through cloud
Along the coasts of Time . . . .

Out of that mist of years there came
A cross-barred gate of wood.
I clutched, I kissed the unheavenly frame
So hard, it trickled blood.

My head upon the iron lay.
I slobbered blood and foam.
Yea, like a dog, I knew the way,
A hundred yards from home.

Iron and blood and wood ! They knew
The secret of that cry
When the Eternal Passion drew
Their Maker through—to die.

A Country Lane in Heaven

I knew each little hawthorn-cloud
  Along my misty lane,
Then my heart burst. She sobbed aloud,
  Between my arms again.

TO THE DESTROYERS

YES. You have shattered many an ancient wrong,
And we were with you, heart and mind and soul,
But there are fools who cast away control
In life and thought and art; because the strong
We dare to say it—have now destroyed so long,
That careless minds forget the unchanging goal—
The nobler order which shall make us whole,
The service which is freedom, beauty, song.

We shall be stoned as traitors to your cause
While the real traitors that you did not know,
Chaos and Vice, trumpet themselves as free.
Pray God that, loyal to the eternal laws,
A little remnant, mauled by friend and foe
Save you through Truth, and bring you Liberty.

THE BRINGERS OF GOOD NEWS

LIKE fallen stars the watch-fires gleamed
Along our menaced age that night!
Our bivouacked century tossed and dreamed
Of battle with the approaching light.

Rumours of change, a sea-like roar,
Shook the firm earth with doubt and dread:
The clouds, in rushing legions bore
Their tattered eagles overhead.

I saw the muffled sentries rest
On the dark hills of Time. I saw
Around them march from East to West
The stars of the unresting law.

I knew that in their mighty course
They brought the dawn, they brought the day;
And that the unconquerable force
Of the new years was on the way.

The Bringers of Good News

I heard the feet of that great throng !
I saw them shine, like hope, afar !
Their shout, their shout was like a song,
And O, 'twas not a song of war !

Yet, as the whole world with their tramp
Quivered, a signal-lightning spoke,
A bugle warned our darkling camp,
And, like a thunder-cloud, it woke.

Our searchlights raked the world's wide ends.
O'er the dark hills a grey light crept.
Down, through the light, that host of friends
We took for foemen, triumphing swept.

The old century could not hear their cry.
How should it hear the song they sang ?
We bring good news ! It pierced the sky !
We bring good news ! The welkin rang.

One shout of triumph and of faith ;
And then—our shattering cannon roared !
But, over the reeking ranks of death,
The song rose like a single sword.

The Bringers of Good News

We bring good news! Red flared the guns!
We bring good news! The sabres flashed!
And the dark age with its own sons
In blind and furious battle clashed.

A swift, a terrible bugle pealed.
The sulphurous clouds were rolled away.
Embraced, embraced, on that red field,
The wounded and the dying lay.

We bring good news! Blood choked the word,
—We knew you not; so dark the night!—
O father, was I worth your sword?
O son, O herald of the light!

We bring good news!—The darkness fills
Mine eyes!—Nay, the night ebbs away.
And over the everlasting hills
The great new dawn led on the day.

THE TRUMPET-CALL

I

TRUMPETER, sound the great recall!
Swift, O swift, for the squadrons break,
The long lines waver, mazed in the gloom!
Hither and thither the blind host blunders!
Stand thou firm for a dead Man's sake,
Firm where the ranks reel down to their doom,
Stand thou firm in the midst of the thunders,
Stand where the steeds and the riders fall,
Set the bronze to thy lips and sound
A rally to ring the whole world round!
Trumpeter, rally us, rally us, rally us!
Sound the great recall.

II

Trumpeter, sound for the ancient heights !
Clouds of the earth-born battle cloak
The heaven that our fathers held from of old ;
And we—shall we prate to their sons of the gain
In gold or bread ? Through yonder smoke
The heights that never were won with gold
Wait, still bright with their old red stain,
For the thousand chariots of God again,
And the steel that swept thro' a hundred fights
With the Ironsides, equal to life and death,
The steel, the steel of their ancient faith !
Trumpeter, rally us, rally us, rally us !
Sound for the sun-lit heights !

III

Trumpeter, sound for the faith again !
Blind and deaf with the dust and the blood,
Clashing together we know not whither
The tides of the battle would have us advance.

The Trumpet-Call

Stand thou firm in the crimson flood,
Send the lightning of thy great cry
Through the thunders, athwart the storm,
Sound till the trumpets of God reply
From the heights we have lost in the steadfast sky,
From the Strength we despised and rejected.
Then,
Locking the ranks as they form and form,
Lift us forward, banner and lance,
Mailed in the faith of Cromwell's men,
When from their burning hearts they hurled
The gage of heaven against the world!
Trumpeter, rally us, rally us, rally us,
Up to the heights again.

IV

Trumpeter, sound for the last Crusade!
Sound for the fire of the red-cross kings,
Sound for the passion, the splendour, the pity
That swept the world for a dead Man's sake,

The Trumpet-Call

Sound, till the answering trumpet rings
Clear from the heights of the holy City,
Sound till the lions of England awake,
Sound for the tomb that our lives have betrayed;
O'er broken shrine and abandoned wall,
Trumpeter, sound the great recall,
Trumpeter, rally us, rally us, rally us;
Sound for the last Crusade!

v

Trumpeter, sound for the splendour of God!
Sound the music whose name is law,
Whose service is perfect freedom still,
The order august that rules the stars!
Bid the anarchs of night withdraw,
Too long the destroyers have worked their will,
Sound for the last, the last of the wars!
Sound for the heights that our fathers trod,
When truth was truth and love was love,
With a hell beneath, but a heaven above,
Trumpeter, rally us, up to the heights of it!
Sound for the City of God.

VALUES

THE moon that sways the rhythmic seas,
The wheeling earth, the marching sky,—
I ask not whence the order came
That moves them all as one.

These are your chariots. Nor shall these
Appal me with immensity;
I know they carry one heart of flame
More precious than the sun.

THE HEROIC DEAD

(On the loss of the Titanic)

IF in the noon they doubted, in the night
They never swerved. Death had no power to appal.
There was one Way, one Truth, one Life, one Light,
One Love that shone triumphant over all.

If in the noon they doubted, at the last
There was no Way to part, no Way but One
That rolled the waves of Nature back and cast
In ancient days a shadow across the sun.

If in the noon they doubted, their last breath
Saluted once again the eternal goal,
Chanted a love-song in the face of Death
And rent the veil of darkness from the soul.

The Heroic Dead

If in the noon they doubted, in the night
They waved the shadowy world of strife aside,
Flooded high heaven with an immortal light,
And taught the deep how its Creator died.

THE CAROL OF THE FIR-TREE

QUOTH the Fir-tree, " Orange and vine "
Sing 'Nowell, Nowell, Nowell'!
" Have their honour : I have mine ! "
In Excelsis Gloria!
" I am kin to the great king's house,"
Ring 'Nowell, Nowell, Nowell'!
" And Lebanon whispers in my boughs."
In Excelsis Gloria!

Apple and cherry, pear and plum,
Winds of Autumn, sigh 'Nowell'!
All the trees like mages come
Bending low with 'Gloria'!
Holding out on every hand
Summer pilgrims to Nowell!
Gorgeous gifts from Elfin-land.
And the May saith 'Gloria'!

The Carol of the Fir-Tree

Out of the darkness—who shall say
Gold and myrrh for this Nowell!
How they win their wizard way?
Out of the East with 'Gloria'!
Men that eat of the sun and dew
Angels laugh and sing, 'Nowell'
Call it "fruit," and say it "grew"!
Into the West with 'Gloria'!

"Leaves that fall," whispered the Fir
Through the forest sing 'Nowell'!
"I am winter's minister."
In Excelsis Gloria!
Summer friends may come and go,
Up the mountain sing 'Nowell.'
Love abides thro' storm and snow.
Down the valley, 'Gloria'!

"On my boughs, on mine, on mine,"
Father and mother, sing 'Nowell'!
"All the fruits of the earth shall twine."
Bending low with 'Gloria.'

The Carol of the Fir-Tree

" Sword of wood and doll of wax "
Little children, sing ' Nowell.'
" Swing on the stem was cleft with the axe ! "
Craftsmen all, a ' Gloria.'

" Hear ! I have looked on the other side."
Out of the East, O sing ' Nowell ' !
" Because to live this night I died ! "
Into the West with ' Gloria.'
" Hear ! In this lighted room I have found "
Ye that seek, O sing ' Nowell ' !
" The spell that worketh underground."
Ye that doubt, a ' Gloria.'

" I have found it, even I,"
Ye that are lowly, sing ' Nowell ' !
" The secret of this alchemy ! "
Ye that are poor, a ' Gloria.'
" Look, your tinsel turneth to gold."
Sing ' Nowell ! Nowell ! Nowell ! '
" Your dust to a hand for love to hold ! "
In Excelsis Gloria.

The Carol of the Fir-Tree

" Lay the axe at my young stem now ! "
Woodman, woodman, sing ' Nowell.'
" Set a star on every bough ! "
In Excelsis Gloria.
" Hall and cot shall see me stand,"
Rich and poor man, sing ' Nowell ' !
" Giver of gifts from Elfin-land."
Oberon, answer ' Gloria.'

" Hung by the hilt on your Christmas-tree "
Little children, sing ' Nowell ' !
" Your wooden sword is a cross for me."
Emperors, a ' Gloria.'
" I have found that fabulous stone "
Ocean-worthies, cry ' Nowell.'
" Which turneth all things into one."
Wise men all, a ' Gloria.'

" It is not ruby nor anything "
Jeweller, jeweller, sing ' Nowell ' !
" Fit for the crown of an earthly king."
In Excelsis Gloria !

The Carol of the Fir-Tree

" It is not here ! It is not here ! "
Traveller, rest and cry ' Nowell ' !
" It is one thing and everywhere ! "
Heaven and Earth sing ' Gloria.'

" It is the earth, the moon, the sun,"
Mote in the sunbeam, sing ' Nowell ' !
" And all the stars that march as one."
In Excelsis Gloria !
" Here, by the touch of it, I can see "
Sing, O Life, a sweet Nowell !
" The world's King die on a Christmas-tree."
Answer, Death, with " Gloria."

" Here, not set in a realm apart,"
East and West are one ' Nowell ' !
" Holy Land is in your Heart ! "
North and South one ' Gloria ' !
" Death is a birth, birth is a death,"
Love is all, O sing ' Nowell ' !
" And London one with Nazareth."
And all the World a ' Gloria.'

" And angels over your heart's roof sing "
Birds of God, O pour ' Nowell ' !
" That a poor man's son is the Son of a King ! "
Out of your heart this " Gloria ' !
" Round the world you'll not away "
In your own soul, they sing ' Nowell ' !
" From Holy Land this Christmas Day ! "
In your own soul, this ' Gloria.'

THE CRY IN THE NIGHT

IT tears at the heart in the night, that moan of the wind,
That desolate moan.
It is worse than the cry of a child. I can hardly bear
To hear it, alone.

It is worse than the sobbing of love, when love is estranged;
For this is a cry
Out of the desolate ages. It never has changed.
It never can die.

A cry over numberless graves, dark, helpless and blind,
From the measureless past,
To the measureless future, a sobbing before the first laughter,
And after the last!

. . . . . .

The Cry in the Night

From the height of creation, in passion eternal, the Word
Rushes forth, the loud cry,
Forsaken! Forsaken! It cuts through the night like a sword!
Shall it win no reply?

Not of earth is that height of all sorrow, past time, out of space,
Therefore here, here and now,
Universal, a Calvary, crowned with Thy passionate face,
Thy thorn-wounded brow.

Ah, could I shrink if Thy heart for each heart upon earth
Must break like a sea?
Could I hear, could I bear it at all, if I were not a part
Of this labour in Thee?

Shall I accuse Thee, then? God, I account it my own
All the grief I can bear,

On Thy Cross of Creation, to balance earth's
bliss and atone,
Atone for life there.

If this be the One Way for ever, which not Thine
all-might
Could change, if it would,
Till the truth be untrue, till the dark be the
same as the light,
And till evil be good,

Shall I who took part in thine April, shrink now
from my part
In thine anguish to be ?
If Thy goal be the One goal of all, shall not
even man's heart
Endure this, with Thee ;

Die with Thee, balancing life, or help Thee to pay
For our hope with our pain ? . . .
O, the voice of the wind in the night ! Is it day,
then, broad day,
On the blind earth again ?

ASTRID

(An Experiment in Initial Rhymes)

WHITE-armed Astrid,—ah, but she was beautiful!—
Nightly wandered weeping thro' the ferns in the moon,
Slowly, weaving her strange garland in the forest,
Crowned with white violets,
Gowned in green.
Holy was that glen where she glided,
Making her wild garland as Merlin had bidden her,
Breaking off the milk-white horns of the honeysuckle,
Sweetly dripped the dew upon her small white
Feet.

White-throated Astrid,—ah, but she was beautiful!—
Nightly sought the answer to that riddle in the moon.

Astrid

She must weave her garland, ere she save her soul.
Three long years she has wandered there in vain.
Always, always, the blossom that would finish it
Falls to her feet, and the garland breaks and vanishes,
Breaks like a dream in the dawn when the dreamer
Wakes.

White-bosomed Astrid,—ah, but she was beautiful !—
Nightly tastes the sorrow of the world in the moon.
Will it be this little white miracle, she wonders.
How shall she know it, the star that will save her ?
Still, ah still, in the moonlight she crouches
Bowing her head, for the garland has crumbled !
All the wild petals for the thousand and second time
Fall.

Astrid

White-footed Astrid,—ah, but she is beautiful!—
Nightly seeks the secret of the world in the moon.
She will find the secret. She will find the golden
Key to the riddle, on the night when she has numbered them,
Marshalled all her wild flowers, ordered them as music,
Star by star, note by note, changing them and ranging them,
Suddenly, as at a kiss, all will flash together,
Flooding like the dawn thro' the arches of the woodland,
Fern and thyme and violet, maiden-hair and primrose
Turn to the Rose of the World, and He shall fold her,
Kiss her on the mouth, saying, all the world is one now,
This is the secret of the music that the soul hears,—
This.

THE INIMITABLE LOVERS

THEY tell this proud tale of the Queen—
Cleopatra,
Subtlest of women that the world has ever
seen,
How that, on the night when she parted with
her lover
Anthony, tearless, dry-throated, and sick-
hearted,
A strange thing befell them in the darkness
where they stood.

Bitter as blood was that darkness.
And they stood in a deep window, looking to
the west.
Her white breast was brighter than the moon
upon the sea,
And it moved in her agony (because it was the
end !)
Like a deep sea, where many had been drowned.

Proud ships that were crowned with an Emperor's eagles
Were sunken there forgotten, with their emeralds and gold.
They had drunken of that glory, and their tale was told, utterly,
Told.

There, as they parted, heart from heart, mouth from mouth,
They stared upon each other. They listened. For the South-wind
Brought them a rumour from afar; and she said,
Lifting her head, too beautiful for anguish,
Too proud for pity,—
It is the gods that leave the City! O, Anthony, Anthony, the gods have forsaken us;
Because it is the end! They leave us to our doom.
Hear it! And unshaken in the darkness,
Dull as dropping earth upon a tomb in the distance,
They heard, as when across a wood a low wind comes,

A muttering of drums, drawing nearer,
Then louder and clearer, as when a trumpet sings
To battle, it came rushing on the wings of the wind,
A sound of sacked cities, a sound of lamentation,
A cry of desolation, as when a conquered nation
Is weeping in the darkness, because its tale is told;
And then—a sound of chariots that rolled thro' that sorrow
Trampled like a storm of wild stallions, tossing nearer,
Trampled louder, clearer, triumphantly as music
Till lo! in that great darkness, along that vacant street,
A red light beat like a furnace on the walls,
Then—like the blast when the North-wind calls to battle,
Blaring thro' the blood-red tumult and the flame,
Shaking the proud City as they came, an hundred elephants,

Cream-white and bronze, and splashed with bitter crimson,
Trumpeting for battle as they trod, an hundred elephants,
Bronze and cream-white, and trapped with gold and purple,
Towered like tuskéd castles, every thunder-laden footfall
Dreadful as the shattering of a City. Yet they trod,
Rocking like an earthquake, to a great triumphant music,
And, swinging like the stars, black planets, white moons,
Thro' the stream of the torches, they brought the red chariot,
The chariot of the battle-god—Mars.
While the tall spears of Sparta tossed clashing in his train,
And a host of ghostly warriors cried aloud
All hail! to those twain, and went rushing to the darkness
Like a pageantry of cloud, for their tale was told
—utterly—
Told.

And following, in the fury of the vine, rushing down
Like a many-visaged torrent, with ivy-rod and thyrse,
And many a wild and foaming crown of roses,
Crowded the Bacchanals, the brown-limbed shepherds,
The red-tongued leopards, and the glory of the god!
Iacchus! Iacchus! without dance, without song,
They cried and swept along to the darkness.
Only for a breath when the tumult of their torches
Crimsoned the deep window where that dark warrior stood
With the blood upon his mail, and the Queen—Cleopatra,
Frozen to white marble—the Mænads raised their timbrels
Tossed their white arms, with a clash—*All hail!*

Like wild swimmers, pale, in a sea of blood and wine,
All hail! All hail! Then they swept into the darkness
And the darkness buried them. Their tale was told—utterly—
Told.

And following them, O softer than the moon upon the sea,
Aphrodite, implacably, shone.
Like a furnace of white roses, Aphrodite and her train
Lifted their white arms to those twain in the silence
Once, and were gone into the darkness;
Once, and away into the darkness they were swept
Like a pageantry of cloud, without praise, without pity.
Then the dark City slept. And the Queen
—Cleopatra—

The Inimitable Lovers

Subtlest of women that this earth has ever seen,
  Turning to her lover in the darkness where
    he stood,
With the blood upon his mail,
  Bowing her head upon that iron in the dark-
    ness,
  Wept.

THE WHITE CLIFFS

WODIN made the red cliffs, the red walls of England.
Round the South of Devonshire, they burn against the blue.
Green is the water there; and, clear as liquid sunlight,
Blue-green as mackerel, the bays that Raleigh knew.

Thor made the black cliffs, the battlements of England,
Climbing to Tintagel where the white gulls wheel.
Cold are the caverns there, and sullen as a cannon-mouth,
Booming back the grey swell that gleams like steel.

The White Cliffs

Balder made the white cliffs, the white shield
of England
(Crowned with thyme and violet where Sussex
wheatears fly),
White as the White Ensign are the bouldered
heights of Dover,
Beautiful the scutcheon that they bare against
the sky.

So the world shall sing of them—the white cliffs
of England,
White, the glory of her sails, the banner of her
pride.
Red and black,—their seamen met and broke the
dread Armada.
Only white may show the world the shield for
which they died.

THE ROMAN WAY

HE that has loyally served the State
Whereof he found himself a part,
Or spent his life-blood to create
A kingdom's treasure in his art ;

Who sees the enemies of his land
Applauded, by her sects and schools ;
And the high thought they scarce had scanned
Derided and belied by fools ;

—Better to know it soon than late !—
Struggling, he wins a meed of praise ;
Achieving, he is dogged by hate
Or stung by malice all his days.

O, Emperor of the Stoic clan,
Enfold him, then, with nobler pride.
Teach him that nought can hurt a man
Who will not turn or stoop to chide.

The Roman Way

Can falsehood kindle or bedim
  One bay-leaf in his quiet crown ?
Ten thousand Lies may pluck at him,
  But only Truth can tear him down.

Why should he heed the thing they say ?
  They never asked if it were true.
Why brush one scribbler's tale away
  For others to invent a new ?

No, let him search his heart, secure
  —If Truth be there—from tongue or pen ;
And teach us, Emperor, to endure,
  To think like Romans and like men.

THRICE-ARMED

THUS only should it come, if come it must,—
Not with a riot of flags and a mob-born cry,
But with a noble faith, a conscience high
That, if we fail, we failed not in our trust.
We fought for peace. We dared the bitter thrust
Of calumny for peace, and watched her die,
Her scutcheons rent from sky to outraged sky
By felon hands and trampled into the dust.

We proffered justice, and we saw the law
Cancelled by stroke on stroke of those deft hands
Which still retain the imperial forger's pen.
They must have blood—Then, at this last, we draw
The sword, not with a riot of flags and bands,
But silence, and a mustering of men.

Thrice-Armed

They challenge Truth. An Empire makes reply,
East, West, North, South, one honour and one might,
From sea to sea, from height to war-worn height,
The old word rings out—to conquer or to die.
And we shall conquer! Though their eagles fly
Through heaven, around this ancient isle unite
Powers that were never vanquished in the fight,
The unconquerable Powers that cannot lie.

Though fire destroy her flesh, and many a year
This land forgot the faith that made her great,
Now, as her fleets cast off the North Sea foam,
Casting aside all faction and all fear,
Thrice-armed in all the majesty of her fate,
Britain remembers, and her sword strikes home.

A SONG OF HOPE

NOT in those eyes, too kind for truth,
Which dare not note how beauties wane;
Nor in that crueller joy of youth
Which turns from sorrow with disdain;
No—no—not there,
Abides the hope that answers our despair.

Lie where they hid thy dead away.
Knock on that unrelenting door;
Then break, O desolate heart, and say
Farewell, farewell, for evermore . . .
There, only there,
Abides the hope that conquers all despair.

The silence that refused to bless
Till grief had turned the heart to stone . . .
What soul compact of nothingness
Could hear so fierce a trumpet blown?
Then hear, O hear,
The dreadful hope that equals all despair.

A Song of Hope

There, till the deep atoning Might
  Shall answer all that each can pray,
The very boundlessness of night
  Proclaims—and waits—an equal day.
    There, only there,
—But O, sing low, sweet strings, lest hope take wing!—
  Abides the hope that answers all despair.

THE CRAGS

(In memory of Thomas Bailey Aldrich)

HAD I the right Falernian, friend,
A mellower thanks than this I'd send
For all those golden days
Among your creeks and bays ;

Where, founded on a rock, your house
Between the pines' unfading boughs
Watches through sun and rain
That lonelier coast of Maine ;

And the Atlantic's mounded blue
Breaks on your crags the summer through,
A long pine's length below,
In rainbow-tinted snow.

While on your railed verandah there
As on a deck you sail through air,
And sea and cloud and sky
Go softly streaming by.

The Crags

Like delicate oils, at set of sun,
Smoothing the waves the colours run
Around the enchanted hull,
Anchored and beautiful;

Restoring to that sun-dried star
You brought from coral isles afar,
With shells that mock the moon,
The tints of their lagoon;

Till, from within, your lamps declare
Your harbours by the colours there,
An Indian god, a fan
Painted in Old Japan.

Then, best of all, I think, at night
The moon that makes a road of light
Across the whispering sea,
A road—for memory;

When the blue dusk has filled the pane,
And the great pine-logs burn again,
And books are good to read.
—For his were books indeed!—

Their silken shadows, rustling, dim,
May sing no more of Spain for him ;
No shadows of old France
Renew their courtly dance.

He walks no more where shadows are
But left their ivory gates ajar,
That shadows might prolong
The dance, the tale, the song.

His was no narrow test or rule,
He chose the best of every school,—
Stendhal and Keats and Donne,
Balzac and Stevenson ;

Wordsworth and Flaubert filled their place.
Dumas met Hawthorne face to face.
There were both new and old
In his good realm of gold.

Our modern Vergil builded there
A Camelot of more lustrous air,
And there, too, found a home
The Tennyson of Rome.

The Crags

The title-pages bore his name ;
And, nightly, by the dancing flame,
Following him, I found
That all was haunted ground ;

Until a kindlier shadow fell
Upon the leaves he loved so well,
And I no longer read,
But talked with him instead.

ON THE SOUTH COAST

COME away into the sun and see
All the heavens that used to be,
Daily, hourly, brought to birth
Out of the deep remembering earth.

This is England, this is the land
That holds my heart in her sweet hand.
This is she whose turf, I pray,
Will hide me, on her breast, one day.

Cast you down on the close-cropped turf.
See how the white cliff spreads the surf
On greening seas that glitter and trail
To southward like a peacock's tail.

Come away over the hills of thyme,
Where folds like elfin belfries chime
Till Eve, in a cloud of her dusky hair,
Makes it Elf-land everywhere.

On the South Coast

You shall pity the king on his throne.
You shall know what never was known.
All the glory of all the skies
Utterly yours in your true love's eyes ;

All the bloom to the world's end
And all the heavens that over it bend,
Compacted in one garden white,
The garden of your love's delight.

This is England, this is the land
That holds my soul in her sweet hand.
This is she whose turf, I pray,
Will hide me on her heart one day.

OLDER THAN THE HILLS

OLDER than the hills, older than the sea,
Older than the heart of the Spring,
O, what is this that breaks
From the blind shell, wakes,
Wakes, and is gone like a wing ?

Older than the sea, older than the moon,
Older than the heart of the May,
What is this blind refrain
Of a song that shall remain
When the singer is long gone away ?

Older than the moon, older than the stars,
Older than the wind in the night,—
Though the young dews are sweet
On the heather at our feet
And the blue hills laughing back the light,—

Older than the Hills

Till the stars grow young, till the hills grow young
O, Love, we shall walk through Time,
Till we round the world at last,
And the future be the past,
And the winds of Eden greet us from the prime.

THE SONG-TREE

GROW, my song, like a tree,
As thou hast ever grown,
Since first, a wondering child,
Long since, I cherished thee.
It was at break of day,
Well I remember it,—
The first note that I heard,
A magical undertone,
Sweeter than any bird
—Or so it seemed to me—
And my tears ran wild.
This tale, this tale is true.
The light was growing gray ;
And the rhymes ran so sweet
(For I was only a child)
That I knelt down to pray.

Grow, my song, like a tree.
Since then I have forgot
A thousand friends, but not

The Song-Tree

The song that set me free,
So that to thee I gave
My hopes and my despairs,
My boyhood's ecstasy,
My manhood's prayers.
In dreams I have watched thee grow,
A ladder of sweet boughs,
Where angels come and go,
And birds keep house.
In dreams, I have seen thee wave
Over a distant land,
And watched thy roots expand,
And given my life to thee,
As I would give my grave.

Grow, my song, like a tree,
And when I am grown old,
Let me die under thee,
Die to enrich thy mould;
Die at thy roots, and so
Help thee to grow.
Make of this body and blood
Thy sempiternal food.

The Song-Tree

Then let some little child,
  Some friend I shall not see,
When the great dawn is gray,
  Some lover I have not known,
In summers far away,
  Sit listening under thee.
And in thy rustling hear
  That mystical undertone,
Which made my tears run wild,
  And made thee, O, how dear.

In the great years to be ?
  I am proud then ? Ah, not so.
I have lived and died for thee.
  Be patient. Grow.

Grow, my song, like a tree.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
General Literature	2
Ancient Cities	13
Antiquary's Books	13
Arden Shakespeare	14
Classics of Art	14
'Complete' Series	15
Connoisseur's Library	15
Handbooks of English Church History	16
Handbooks of Theology	16
'Home Life' Series	16
Illustrated Pocket Library of Plain and Coloured Books	16
Leaders of Religion	17
Library of Devotion	17
Little Books on Art	18
Little Galleries	18
Little Guides	18
Little Library	19
Little Quarto Shakespeare	20
Miniature Library	20
New Library of Medicine	21
New Library of Music	21
Oxford Biographies	21
Four Plays	21
States of Italy	21
Westminster Commentaries	22
'Young' Series	22
Shilling Library	22
Books for Travellers	23
Some Books on Art	23
Some Books on Italy	24
Fiction	25
Books for Boys and Girls	30
Shilling Novels	30
Sevenpenny Novels	31

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